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S T E A M V O Y A G E S.

V O L. I.







STEAM VOYAGES
ON
THE SEINE, THE MOSELLE, & THE RHINE;
WITH
RAILROAD VISITS
TO
THE PRINCIPAL CITIES OF BELGIUM,
&c. &c.

By MICHAEL J. QUIN, Esq.,
Author of "A Steam Voyage down the Danube,"
"A Year in Spain," &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
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J. L. COX & SONS,
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ADVERTISEMENT.

IT was Mr. Quin's merit and good fortune to open to his fellow-countrymen, and, indeed, to foreign tourists in general, the grand and peculiar attractions which THE DANUBE had in store for their admiration. His "Steam Voyage" down that river has been diffused all over the continent, not only in the English, but also in the French and German languages, and has induced great numbers of persons to visit scenes which had been previously almost unknown.

In the present work, Mr. Quin has performed a similar office for the river MOSELLE, which, although familiar as to its name, on account of the exquisite wines produced upon its banks, has hitherto lain as much

concealed, from British tourists especially, as the Danube itself previously to his exposition of its wonders and beauties. And the reasons for this neglect are obvious. In the first place, the Moselle is entirely out of the highway (the Rhine) of the vast majority of our summer emigrants, whose object generally is, to visit the baths of Germany, or to proceed by Switzerland into Italy. Although actually passing the mouth of the Moselle, they never deviate into that river, which would cause delay, and must be visited entirely for its own sake. Moreover, until very lately, there were no steam-vessels on the Moselle, and the only mode of making a voyage upon it was by means of the common passage-boats of the country, which were small, inconvenient, wretchedly managed, and by no means free from danger in windy weather; nor were the inns on either bank at all calculated to invite the stranger.

But the steamer has effectually redressed these evils. The voyage from Coblenz to Treves may be easily made in one day, and it may be asserted without fear of contradiction, that the beauty of the scenery on the banks of the Moselle, between those two cities, is without rivalry in Europe. The visiter who chooses to linger on those banks, and to penetrate into the country beyond them, will find ample and delightful occupation for weeks, amidst its innumerable sylvan and most romantic charms. Ausonius, one of the later Latin poets, has written an excellent poem in praise of the Moselle ; it has figured much in several of the ancient, and in most of the modern wars ; its scenes of delicious repose invited many religious orders, in the primeval ages of Christianity, to erect churches and monasteries upon the hills that crown its banks. The same attractions induced great numbers of the Crusaders, upon their return from

Palestine, to fix their chateaus near those holy places—so much so, that eight or ten leagues of the margins of this river have for ages preserved the title of the “Vale of Chivalry;” nor is there any country where the memory of Bacchus is more honoured than on the banks of the Moselle.

Besides his minute descriptions of the Moselle, Mr. Quin presents us with an amusing excursion up the Seine, and sketches off in a few pages the principal beauties of the Rhine and the Neckar. Altogether, his work will be found to be the production of no common traveller, and it is full of novelty, even in these days of perpetual locomotion.

With deep regret the Editor finds it necessary to add, that the talented author of this work, whilst revising the proof sheets, became seriously ill, and died at Boulogne, where he had for some time been residing for the benefit of his health.

London, June 3, 1843.

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STEAM VOYAGES
ON THE
MOSELLE AND OTHER RIVERS
IN
GERMANY AND FRANCE.

CHAPTER I.

Phoenix Steamer. Accommodations. Voyage to Havre. Arrival at Havre. Harfleur. Railroad to Paris. French Characteristics. Honfleur. Montagne de Grace. Castle of Orcher. Presalé Mutton. Tancarville. Quillebeuf. The Rollo Steamer. A French lady.

SOME time before I set out upon my late journey to Belgium, Germany, and Italy, I had occasion to visit Paris on professional business, in company with my friend Mr. Mathew Forster,

now M. P. for Berwick ; and having learned from the newspapers that a new and powerful steamer, the “ Phœnix,” proposed to waft its passengers in eighteen hours from the Iron Gate Stairs of the Tower to the port of Havre, I gladly availed myself of this mode of conveyance, the more especially as I was thoroughly sick of the old jog-trot diligence along the monotonous route from Calais. I was told that a steamer in communication with the “ Phœnix ” would forward me on to Rouen ; but I had no notion that I could accomplish the whole way from London to Paris by steam, until I actually made the experiment. It is not a little remarkable that in these days of advertisements and placards, so little should have been known at this side of the channel of the facilities which exist for varying the lines and modes of communication between the two capitals. I venture to say that not two out of ninety-eight readers of these pages have ever before heard that, with the exception of riding about ten minutes in an omnibus, for which they would pay the sum of six sous, they might transfer themselves, by the aid of steam, from the Thames to the Tuilleries.

Steamers have plied for some years between Havre and Southampton. Within the last season or two, boats of considerable power, the "Queen Adelaide" and the "Clyde," have been established between Havre and London. I understood that the "Phoenix" was specially built for its present station. It is certainly a very beautiful vessel. The principal saloon is fitted up in a style of decoration and luxury, which induced me altogether to forget that there was but a plank between my back and the sea, while I was stretched out on one of its magnificent couches. The ladies' room is a bijou. The furniture, the divans, as they may be called, the draperies, are of almost oriental sumptuousness, and tempt even the most timorous to repose.

The fare, exclusive of living, is a guinea and a half. The table is tolerably well served. In this department, I am bound to remark, that there is—or at least *was*—a disposition to overcharge beyond all reasonable bounds. Two gentlemen, for instance, ordered by way of luncheon, three mutton chops, for which eighteen-pence at the utmost would have been able compensation. They were set down in the bill at four shillings! an ex-

tortion which was very properly resisted. The item was then reduced to half its original amount. The vessel and her engines (of a hundred and eighty horse power) are of English construction ; but the property belongs to a French company, whose members are, I believe, exclusively merchants residing in Havre. This enterprise is only one of many in which they are engaged, Havre having ranked, since the peace, among the most prosperous commercial ports of France, and very likely, sooner or later, to attract to itself much of the trade which has been hitherto enjoyed by Bordeaux.

We started from the Tower about ten o'clock (7th of June) with fifty passengers, under a brilliant sky ; notwithstanding Paddy Murphy's doleful prognostics to the contrary, the day, though cold for the season, was remarkably fine. We soon overtook and left far behind us the "Clyde," which had set out for the same destination an hour before us. In endeavouring to avoid some small craft, which we were near running down, we grounded for a few minutes ; but we backed out of the sand-bank by reversing the motion of our pad-

dles, and, the tide also coming to our assistance, we moved on once more at a brilliant pace. Greenwich Hospital, Gravesend, Herne Bay, Margate, the North Foreland, and Ramsgate, successively displayed their well-known features. We dined merrily while passing the Downs, and, shooting through the Straits of Dover, passed into the open sea, catching here and there through our glasses shadowy views of Ambleteuse and Boulogne on one side, and of Dungeness upon the other. The sun having bidden us a good evening, the stars soon after told us that it was time to go to bed, a hint which we took in very good part. There not being state berths for all of us, mattresses were speedily arranged in the saloon, and at four o'clock the following morning, peeping through my window after a delicious sleep, I found that we were snugly anchored before Havre.

Our toilet was the work of a few moments. The Custom-house officers, however, being still wrapped in profound repose, I presume, some difficulty occurred about our baggage. My friend, Mr. Forster, who was my *compagnon de voyage* upon this occasion, agreed with me to commit the care of our

effects to a commissioner who had been recommended to us, and to proceed without delay to Rouen by the “Normandie,” which was already getting up her smoke. We accordingly landed at five o’clock, and, as the “Normandie” was not to leave until half-past six, we strolled through the town.

Havre is not only advantageously but very beautifully situated on a part of the coast retiring towards the south-east from the sea, where the Seine fully discloses her mouth, and pours forth the full volume of her waters. In the time of Louis XII. it was an inconsiderable village—a mere hamlet in fact, composed of a few fishermen’s huts. The ground upon which its extensive quays, and stores, and other buildings, now stand, is almost wholly composed of alluvial deposits brought down in the course of ages from the interior of the country, and stopped there by the tide. Harfleur was the principal port of Normandy so late as the commencement of the sixteenth century,—Harfleur, which is now full two English miles at the least from the sea, and no longer washed even by the current of the river. This striking geological fact attests the quantity of matter which the Seine is constantly

bringing down from the territory through which it passes, and is compelled to dispose on either side of its shores as soon as it meets the irresistible swell of the ocean. It is evident, moreover, that the roads of Havre are every year becoming more shallow, and it may be inferred that the port itself would soon have to move on farther towards the sea, if the steam-boat, that most fortunate redresser of the inconveniences necessarily incidental to some of the operations of nature, had not come to its assistance. Venice, in like manner, was almost excluded from intercourse with her well-beloved consort the Adriatic, until the talismanic power of steam restored her conjugal rights. The numerous villas which shone in the morning beams on the heights around Havre bear witness to the wealth and numbers of its mercantile community ; and it is a remarkable circumstance that this same community have succeeded very lately in extorting from the government, through the agency of the Chamber of Deputies, a law for the construction of a railroad to Paris, which is to be subscribed for according to the English system of public companies. Down to the commencement of the last session of the

French parliament, almost every enterprise of this kind—roads, canals, bridges—were exclusively in the hands of government.* But a new era in the history of France has just begun under our eyes. Commerce, as in other parts of Europe, has already overthrown in that country the absolute power of the sword, and before many years elapse a king must be contented to reign there upon the same conditions as he reigns in England. This is a revolution peacefully brought about by that worker of endless miracles, the steam-engine, of whose potency we can scarcely, even now, though it has just brought New York half-way over the Atlantic towards our shores, form any thing like an adequate conception.

The “Normandie” commenced operations on the Seine in July, 1835. It is a hundred and seventy-eight French feet in length, and of a hundred and twenty horse power,—the fare ten francs for the principal places—for the secondary, six francs—from Havre to Rouen. There is a restaurateur on board, so that you can live as you like, breakfast

* It is now in progress of construction, 1843.

or dine at any hour you please, in cabinets which are raised upon the deck. When we went on board we found a considerable number of passengers already assembled there, all French, with three or four exceptions. A band was also on board, manifestly a part of the establishment. And here I could not help noticing a characteristic which marked at once the decided difference that exists between the genius of the French and English people, separated though they be from each other by so narrow a channel. A set of musicians on board a Richmond steamer, for instance, would be just the sort of group we often meet in the streets of London—one dressed in blue, another in an old black surtout, a third in a rusty brown coat with a velvet collar that had seen better days, a fourth probably in a mariner's jacket or a Scotch plaid, their instruments being a violoncello, a fiddle or two, a clarionet, and a harp. But the band of the "Normandie" was all military in its appearance. Its members were dressed in uniform, a dim grey turned up with green—a cap perched on the side of the head over thick curling hair—moustaches and formidable whiskers which almost concealed

the human “face divine,”—the instruments, French horns, trombones, and clarionets. They played several quadrilles very indifferently, and yet not without a certain degree of effect, merely from the military precision which marked their exertions. Even the boy who had now and then to cleanse accidental unsightlinesses from the deck, when he had accomplished his work, shouldered his mop as if it had been a firelock.

The bank of the Seine on our right was low and at first concealed from us beneath a thick mist ; it was also at a considerable distance, the river being near the mouth quite as wide as the Thames at Southend. A white sail glistened here and there through the mist where a sunbeam found its way. As we advanced, the country on that side became more hilly, partly pasture, but chiefly occupied by woods, amongst which neat cottages were now and then observable. At half-past seven we arrived opposite Honfleur, a town very charmingly situated, as it commands a full view of Havre and of the sea on towards the English coast. It wears however a melancholy aspect, on account of its old-fashioned, darkly painted wooden houses and churches. Before

Havre assumed any degree of importance, Honfleur was scarcely inferior to Harfleur. It was the principal emporium for colonial produce. Napoleon visited this place in 1802, with a view to consider whether it might not be converted to some use in the progress of the invasion, which he then meditated against England. But the accumulation of sand was found so enormous, that the works which he ordered to be executed there were speedily abandoned. To the west of the town is a hillock called the Montagne de Grace ; on the summit is a chapel dedicated to the Virgin, in which the sailors make vows and offerings before setting out on long voyages, and express gratitude on their return. This hillock is said to contain in its bosom the remains of several rare and curious fossils. The skeleton of an Egyptian crocodile was found in the sand at its foot some years ago. We approached near enough to Honfleur (some twenty passengers being in waiting there for our steamer) to look into its narrow streets, which appeared to me peculiarly dismal, though the sun was shining full upon it. A few fishing-boats were gliding by it at the time. The Seine suddenly widens immediately above

Honfleur, making a bold sweep beneath a fine semi-circle of hills, patches of which are cultivated. They are, however, for the greater part, covered with brushwood and heather, through which the naked cliff often juts out with a picturesque effect. The beach is sandy, edged above high water with a border of lively green. On our left we obtained a distant view of the castle of Orcher, on a lofty pile of rock—amid the ruins of an ancient fortress, erected to defend the entrance of the river. A range of chalky hills extends a considerable way along the verge of the Seine on that side. The castle is said to have been the abode of Robert d'Orcher, one of the chevaliers who accompanied Robert “the Devil” into Palestine.

The castle of Oreher and its neighbourhood are much frequented by the good citizens of Havre during the fine season. It is celebrated for the magnificent prospect which may be seen from its western terrace, commanding the whole of the *embouchure* of the Seine, and an uninterrupted view of the ocean. The rock yields a fountain which is reputed to possess the power of petrifaction. As we passed along through this varying panorama,

the novelty of the pictures which successively presented themselves to the eye on either bank of the noble stream, was not a little heightened by the pleasant faces laughing everywhere around me. The waters agitated by our paddles sparkled gaily in the sun, while the music of our horns and clarionets, amongst which a little octave flute poured occasionally its brilliant notes, tended to dissipate altogether from the mind every thought that was not in keeping with the magic of the scene.

Villages and small towns, with their churches and tapering spires, their old-fashioned high-roofed houses, and white-washed neat cottages, generally fronted with trellises upon which the vine already began to spread its foliage, were now numerous on both banks of the river. The ranges of elevated and undulating hills between which it maintained its course reminded me very much of the Hellespont —exhibiting the same low wooded and heathery appearance, the naked cliff occasionally piercing through the scanty vegetation. I understood, however, that the land immediately behind these hills is remarkable for its richness. Indeed the pasturage and valleys beyond Fiquefleur and Saint Sauveur

on our right are famous for a species of mutton which rivals our South Down; it is distinguished in that part of France under the names of Presalé or Beuzeville. The territory beyond the hills on our left was formerly celebrated for its vines, some of which, however, only very rarely arrived at maturity. Small steamers appeared to be engaged actively in keeping up the communications between the opposite banks of the Seine, and from town to town along the river from Fiquefleur. Several were also occupied in towing vessels, deeply burdened, against the current, destined for Rouen.

The river narrowed rapidly as we approached Tancarville, a rather important and highly picturesque village on our left, which stands on a promontory so bold, that it appeared at some distance almost to forbid our further advance by water. At the foot of the promontory there is a range of pretty cottages to which the artists of Paris usually resort in summer to recover their energies after their labours in the capital, and to pursue their studies in tranquillity. The summit of the chalk rock, which rises to a considerable height, and is precipitous all round, is crowned by

an ancient castle. Immediately below is a château in the old French style, with a pair of round towers, the tops of which are slated and sharply pointed. Small boats for fishing were moored near the cottages. The whole scene looked romantic, and peculiarly favourable to that visionary repose in which painters and poets are so prone to indulge.

I was scarcely done with noting the beautiful features of Tancarville on the left, when those of Quillebeuf on the right still more strongly solicited my admiration. It is the singular charm of this voyaging by steam, that it is perpetually moving one onward from scene to scene, whether one chooses it or not. I own that I should have very willingly lingered an hour or two before Tancarville, enjoying the contemplation of that old castle, that château and its towers, that white cliff shining in the full blaze of the sun, and the dim woods which appeared climbing the sides of the hills in the distance. But the paddles would stop for no such purpose. If a passenger or a bale of goods were to be delivered over or to be taken in, they were the most complaisant pieces of machinery in the world, ceasing their roundabouts in a moment.

But they have no poetry in their souls. They care not one straw for all the combinations of hill and valley, and singing brooks, and pendant foliage, and laughing groups of children, that ever beguiled the enthusiast. On they go, splashing the waters on either side, and bearing the burthen with which they are charged as rapidly as possible to its final destination.

If Tancarville seemed to forbid our progress when we first beheld it, Quillebeuf appeared still more resolved to accomplish that inhospitable purpose. It is situated upon a peninsula, beyond which the river is invisible to the voyager who approaches it, as we did, from the sea. It is only here that those extraordinary serpentine windings terminate, for which the Seine is distinguished through its whole course as far as Paris—windings infinitely more involved and circuitous than those of the Danube. A right line drawn from Paris to Rouen, and from Rouen to Quillebeuf, would pass through no fewer than twenty curves, the deviations of which from the line increase the distance between the two extremes by at least sixty or seventy miles, if not more. A few canals, judi-

ciously cut through the levels which this part of France presents, would materially benefit the navigation of the river. The railroad, however, about to be constructed from Paris to Havre, will doubtless put an end to all speculations of that description.

To the navigators approaching Quillebeuf from the other side of the peninsula, this portion of the river is said to present many dangers, on account of the number and variations of its sand-banks. It exhibits rather a handsome and extensive quay, near which there were several vessels of considerable tonnage ranged in due order. It appeared also to have a steam-boat of its own, designated under the name of the celebrated Rollo, who little dreamed in the hours of his many triumphs that his cognomen would ever be given to a machine worth all his conquests put together. How the old robber would be astonished if he could look out of his tomb, and behold this steamer, with his name painted upon it, moving without sail or oar against the rapid current of the river—its cylinder rolling upwards to the sky volumes of dense smoke, and its superfluous vapour rushing out occasionally

with a hissing sound, as if indignant at the uses to which it had been subjected ! More passengers from Quillebeuf.

Winding round the peninsula we found the river still wide, but narrowing as we proceeded. Small neat lighthouses appeared disposed at intervals along the bank on our right, indicating the difficulties and perils with which the navigation is here attended. I wished for the pencil of Prout to sketch the ghost of a windmill which stood on a height with its tattered sails and its mill-house crumbling into ruin. While I was endeavouring to retain a collection of that fantastically picturesque object, a very pretty young French woman, *attended* by her husband (they seemed newly married !) observed me attempting the sketch. She had learned just English enough to be able to understand it in reading, and to be ambitious of using it in conversation. But—innocent little dove ! —she could seldom get beyond a word or two, which she pronounced in the drollest way in the world. I forgave her for her pretty presumption in asking me whether I had never been in France before ! What a question to a man who, as one of

my critics has said, had already travelled as much as Ulysses—a compliment *he* thought to an author who had steamed down the Danube and galloped over the Balkans—feats of which the old Ionian, I fancy, had but a slender notion, or his son Telemachus either.

CHAPTER II.

Lillebone. Our Musicians. Breakfast. Our Waitress. Her Activity. An Old Maid. Villequier. The Poplar. Caudebec. A lost Island. Pictures on board. Jumieges. The Giant's Chair. Signs of Prosperity.

THE bank on our right as we advanced became more and more rocky, clothed here and there with patches of grass and brushwood. The rock was wholly composed of chalk, and seemed to have been cut through at once by a volcanic operation. In some places it was so high, and deviated so slightly from the perpendicular, that, while I gazed upon it from beneath the awning of our vessel, I might have imagined myself passing through a tunnel excavated in a mountain. Though we kept our way at some distance from the bank on our left, which was comparatively low and open, we obtained a glimpse of the interesting village (for it is now no more than a village) of Lillebone. There

was in the time of the Romans a rather important town in the neighbourhood which they called Julia-Bona, in honour of Julia, daughter of Julius Cæsar. Vestiges of a magnificent amphitheatre, of a splendid bath-room, tombs, coins, swords, masks, and other memorials of Roman luxury and prowess, have been discovered there, which confer upon Lillebone a classical interest. For Englishmen it is, moreover, fraught with historical recollections, as it was the residence of William the Conqueror at the period when he resolved upon invading our shores, and planned the battle of Hastings. It was always a favourite place of abode of the old dukes of Normandy. The château, by the bye, which William occupied, now belongs, I believe, to our noble family of Harcourt, whose ancestors were formerly lords of the county in which it stands. The country, as far as I could observe it, seemed pregnant with all sorts of beauty in that direction—undulating hills teeming with richness—valleys watered by limpid streams—extensive woods—hamlets scattered here and there,—ruins of Roman and Norman pride contrasted with the full bloom of nature, which never grows old.

We at length left our wall of chalk behind us, and emerged upon more open territory, the river still boasting of its amplitude. Poplars now occasionally lined the banks, some of them like palms without branches, except near the summit, others tall and tapering reminding me of the cypresses of the East. Through the trees we had frequent and pretty views of little hamlets and separate cottages thatched with straw, the smoke curling from their chimney-tops, and groups of their young inhabitants peeping out at our steam-boat as we glided along to the sound of our clarionets and horns. And I must do our musicians the justice to observe, that they appeared to feel the variations of the scenery through which we passed; for the ruined castle they had their martial air; for the remains of the church or the abbey, their anthem; for the spreading plain dotted with sheep, their pastoral tune; and for the peopled village, the waltz or the quadrille, which the French village-girl dearly loves. Even the children, the moment they heard the merry sound of our flute, set off a-dancing—bless their blithesome souls !

Orchards, vineyards, meadows, now began to crowd upon us, and—but it was near eight o'clock, and my friend very rationally suggested to me that it was high time to get some breakfast. So we adjourned from our seats on the deck to a cabinet, where a table spread with a cloth, and already almost fully occupied by consumers of mutton-chops and *pommes-de-terre*, and wine, and fruit, and all sorts of good things, added not a little to give a keener edge to the appetite existing within me, though I had been rendered insensible to it by the novelty, the beauty, the cheerfulness, the magical variety of the living panorama, upon which my imagination had been feasting all the morning. The forethought of a rib of *Presalé*, or of a moderately-thick slice from the leg of a *Beuzeville*, is by no means, however, without its charms. So we took our seats, and, having ordered chops and coffee, waited for our turn to be served.

The cabinet held some fourteen or fifteen French, men, women, and children, intently occupied in the business of the moment,—and I must, in justice to our neighbours, remark that no peo-

ple in this world, so far as I have observed, make eating more completely a business than they do. We had for all only one waiter, or rather waitress; a thick stout-built woman of a Flemish aspect, much more of the man than the woman in her face, her hands almost as huge and as dirty-looking as the hoof of an elephant, her almost inarticulated fingers laden with rings of pure gold. A gaily-coloured yellow-and-brown-cotton handkerchief was tied round her head, just permitting her brown hair to be seen at the temples, where it was decorated with small combs, and at the crown, where two combs, also of real tortoiseshell, displayed her superfluous wealth. Her cheeks were tanned almost black. Her gown was of strong brown stuff. She wore two dirty aprons, one of which was turned up at the corner, the said corner being fastened under her waistband. Her legs were cased in black woollen stockings, and her feet moved about, I know not how, in a pair of short list slippers, which were red some years ago. Waitress I called her for the want of some other name; but it by no means expresses her true capacity; she waited for nobody, and on nobody;

everybody seemed, to herself at least, to be under her command. She had a miserable—Shakspeare's apothecary-looking-wretch of a man assisting her, who brought plates, and knives and forks, and all that; she took, or rather wrenched, every thing out of his trembling hands, scolding him all the time with a most voluble tongue and a look of thunder, before which I wonder how he has so long survived—poor devil!

It really was curious to observe the steam-like rapidity and precision with which this lump of animated matter executed the many offices she was called upon to perform. Now she appeared with a heap of plates in her hand, which she dealt around the table, long as it was, in a moment. Parties were constantly succeeding each other in the cabinet. One set called for oysters. She passed the word to her ghost, who brought them instanter. Another demanded coffee. Presto, she was seen pouring it out into the large white cups, which she had already set in order due. “Wine—wine!” cried out a third party. Out she went, and before you could tell whether she had come back or not, the wine was on the table. *Eau-de-*

vie, biftek, salads, thé made their appearance, when called for, with similar celerity. Knives, forks, and spoons, I think she must have produced from her pockets. *The bill* she reckoned up for all her different groups of customers without pen or pencil, or asking what you had ; and this interesting intelligence she contrived to impart to somebody who presented you with a slip of paper accurately containing the whole charge. Ours was sufficiently moderate. For coffee, bread, and butter, *biftek* (for the mutton-chops were all gone), *pommes-de-terre au naturel* (which, by the bye, we could not use, they were so very *natural*, not having been half boiled), and a dozen of oysters, we paid four francs and a half. The *biftek* was not bad, but the oysters, like all French oysters, though lodged in immense shells, were mere embryos, having neither consistence nor flavour.

I could not help being amused by the contrast to our huge waitress which I found seated on a bench on the deck, when we emerged from the cabinet. It was a little, thin, dried-up old maid ; her feet planted on a stool, her hands folded on her lap, her body bent almost double ; near her a

small, plain wooden cage, with a few wires in front, sloping back at the top, so as literally to encase a parroquet on his perch. He must have been a Quaker parroquet, if such a species the naturalists acknowledge. From his perch he could not stir: no sound escaped his beak, and yet he looked contented with his lot. Strange to say, his proprietress (I was going gallantly to say his *fair* proprietress, but the epithet would be wonderfully inappropriate, for she was quite sallow) seemed equally independent. Her bonnet was of sky-blue silk, with a wreath of convolvulus, the flower spread out, beneath which she wore a full double-frilled cap. Her dress was a substantial diamond-figure olive silk, over which she wore a plain cashmere shawl.

I found that while we were engaged at breakfast our steamer had completed its course through one of those extraordinary bends for which the Seine is so remarkable. I cannot describe it better than by comparing it to the figure described by a ball, which a boy flings upon the ground for another to catch at a short distance from him, when it rebounds just above his head.

The rebound brought us to Villequier, the prettiest village, unquestionably, I have ever seen. It is backed by an extensive theatre of rising grounds, richly wooded. It is composed of a single row of remarkably neat cottages, which run along the edge of the river. The hills behind are crowned by a fine château. The cottages were all trellised in front by vines just beginning to spread their beautiful leaves ; and moored in front of each was a small boat, denoting, I believe, that the village is principally inhabited by pilots, whose especial office it is to conduct vessels from this place to La Mailleray, the navigation at that point being perilous. Linen, manifestly of a superior texture, was hanging out to dry. Pretty well-dressed women were busily engaged in arranging it on the lines. Neatly clad urchins, with their red cloth caps, were paddling about in boats, or playing in the gardens attached to the cottages. It was altogether a scene which gladdened the heart, and fixed itself in the memory like a vision, or like one of those enchanting vistas which Claude sometimes shews through a forest. The country on the opposite side, that is on our right, was open, and

rather marshy, long lines of poplar in the distance.

The bank on our right presented a similar character for several leagues—low—here and there marshy, and overgrown with reeds, occasionally yielding good pasturage, upon which sheep and cows were feasting in great numbers, and universally lines of poplar trees, sometimes in squares, more generally running straight along the river, and bearing those palm and cypress forms which I have already noticed. France may, indeed, be deemed peculiarly the land of the poplar. I confess I like it. There is something of a lofty melancholy about it, when its branches are in deep repose, that touches my fancy. The slightest breath of air elicits a gentle sound from them, and their tremulous leaves wave together in the breeze, like the abundant locks of a shepherdess pursuing a straying sheep over the mountain. The pastoral airs of our musicians were quite delicious amid these sylvan scenes.

We had scarcely done talking of the beauties of Villequier, when Caudebec came within our horizon. It is situated at the foot of a mountain, the

heights of which are crowned with forests. The little river St. Gertrude comes sparkling down the declivities, dividing itself into several streams, which mingle with the Seine. The houses are built on terraces, planted with the arbutus and other flowering shrubs ; and the windows being for the most part shaded from the noon-day sun by Venetian blinds, all of which appeared to have been freshly painted, it had more the appearance of an Italian than a French town, paint being a decoration very sparingly used by our neighbours. The public walk is well shaded by elm-trees, through which the parochial church and its magnificent tower were seen in their most picturesque point of view. In the days of our perpetual wars with the Normans, Caudebec was strongly fortified, and cost our armies no little trouble. The fortifications, which were in an amphitheatrical form, have been converted into gardens, and lend a singularly beautiful feature to the scene. The church is in the Gothic style. The principal portal is a model of elegance. The tower looks Moresque, being surmounted by three crowns, which remind one of the Pope's tiara. Henry the Fourth said that

it was the most beautiful church he had ever beheld. In the Chapel of the Virgin, within this edifice, is preserved the marble slab which once covered the tomb of Agnes Sorel—by some good fortune it was rescued from the ruins of the celebrated abbey of Junièges, which we shall come to presently.

A small island formerly existed immediately in front of Caudebec, upon which a monastery was erected belonging to the order of St. Wandrille. The island, monastery, monks and all, suddenly disappeared—one fine morning—strange to say, it reappeared as suddenly in the year 1641, but was soon after buried again beneath the waters, from which it has never since emerged. The Seine and its banks undoubtedly present ample materials for geological speculation.

On we go—right bank still flat and marshy—on the left shepherds and boys engaged in washing sheep preparatory to the process of shearing—here and there clusters of cottages—the country elevated—heights thickly wooded—now and then knolls prettily cultivated—at intervals small lighthouses on an economical scale—again we seem shut in

within a lake—but there is nothing like perseverance. The river again opens, and our unpoetical paddles, permitting us only a distant and transitory glance at the ruins of the abbey of St. Wandrille—a member of the renowned family of Pepin, who preferred these solitudes to all the feudal splendours of a court—impel us onward to La Mailleray, where we stop some moments to get rid of one boat load of passengers, and take in another. It has a splendid old château, and the spire of its church looks well through a cluster of shady trees. Just beyond La Mailleray we find Guerbaville, the principal station on the Seine for the construction of those lighters which carry on the traffic between Havre and Rouen. We saw several of these boats in course of completion. It is a place becoming every day of more importance, and marks the immense strides which France has taken since the peace as a commercial nation.

Pass an odd-looking château on the right—windows narrow, edged with glaring red bricks—corners of the building *decorated* with similar materials—the intervening spaces as white as lime could make them. The banks on both sides low

—rows of poplars as usual—hills in the distance far—far away. My friend, the old maid, is chatting with a tall, courtly seigneur of the days that are now no more. His queue, his long coat, his silver hairs, his gold-headed cane, and his richly chased snuff-box, accord well with the polished ease of his conversation. My lady takes a pinch of his snuff quite comfortably. The parroquet looks as happy as a prince. Just behind this precious trio is a pretty lump of a child, her hair tied in blue riband—her fingers playing with the strings of her high, strong shoes—her smiling little maid carefully watching her, and, at the same time, knitting a stocking with all her might.

The river narrows—there they are—the ruins of Jumièges!—the royal abbey, as it might be called, not merely from its extent and the feudal powers which its priors wielded in the middle ages, but from its having been the residence of more than one exiled monarch. It was the state prison of various dukes and princes first robbed of their dominions, and then accused of high treason. The eastern extremity of the abbey is a mere heap of ruins, but enough of the great central tower, and of the

towers of the portal, still remains to attest the splendour by which the establishment was distinguished in the days of its pride. Alas ! while I gaze upon its ancient ivy-mantled walls, round which numbers of birds are hovering, the sacred pile is rapidly receding from my view, but not without compensation, for in no part of the Seine, perhaps, is the panorama more romantic than immediately above Jumièges. Poplars, willows, olive trees, seem to have been planted by the hand of Nature herself with a view to picturesque effect amidst abrupt hills, and undulating vales watered by meandering brooks, and animated by cottages, and herds and flocks, goats and sheep, sometimes climbing the neighbouring declivities, sometimes reposing by the side of the river. The tinkle of the sheep-bell was constantly in the ear, mingled with the joyous shouts of children who ran out to gaze upon our “ Normandie,” as she rushed against the flowing stream.

In some of the chalk cliffs on our left, dwellings were excavated, which appeared to be inhabited. The chalk formations are very curiously mixed with other rocks immediately beyond Ducler.

There is one of these white cliff's particularly which stands out boldly from the side of the hill, and is not inappropriately called "The Giant's Chair;" for though at first a shapeless mass to the eye, it opens gradually out until it assumes the appearance of an immense arm-chair, fit for Gog or Magog to take a nap in after dining upon a fat ox or two. Other rocks of the same material looked like the giants themselves.

Those who take delight in romantic scenery will find ample gratification in the whole way from Ducler to Rouen. Islands, thickly wooded—peninsulas jutting into the river, and forming apparent lakes—groups of poplars, enclosing gardens that remind one of the Hesperides—numerous boats, their white sails spread to the breeze—cottages, the walls of which are composed partly of wooden beams, in the Swiss style, painted red or black, the gables towards the river—lofty rocks thrown into all sorts of fantastic shapes, combine to tell a story of their own, to which a true lover of the "wild and wonderful" would listen with a rapture he had never felt before.

For the more practical order of minds the same

portion of the Seine also possesses its charms. Heaps of newly-manufactured bricks submitted to the indurating powers of the furnace—piles of fire-wood collected for embarkation—groups of lighters becalmed and laden with the produce of all parts of the world—windmills busy on the heights—steam-*rafts* of two or three tiers bearing passengers for a few *sous* from Ducler to Rouen, or from Rouen to Ducler—rocks yielding to the crow-bar of the quarryman, and transforming under the chisel of the stone-cutter—orchards, olive grounds, vineyards—every sign of industry, and every emblem of prosperity that can bespeak a great and growing nation, abound the whole way, until the spires and steeples of Rouen rise upon the view.

CHAPTER III.

A Steam Raft. Its Construction. Robert-le-Diable. Rouen. Tower of the Cathedral. A Magic Mirror. Trade of Rouen. Hill of St. Catherine. Curious Carvings. Rouen Museum. Dorade Steamer. Elbeuf. An English Artist. A French Artist. Young France. An Octogenarian.

THE steam *raft* mentioned was a curiosity in its way. I have not seen any thing like it elsewhere, and it might be introduced upon some of our canals and rivers with great advantage. Two narrow boats of considerable length placed side by side, leaving a space of about three feet between them, support a platform which extends several feet beyond their outward sides. They are urged forward by a single wheel, which is placed between the two boats, near the poops, where the steam machinery is also arranged. The lower platform sustains another, the interval between them being partly occupied by what is called the parlour, or

principal cabin. Beyond the cabin there is an open space for passengers of a secondary class, and also a space railed off for cattle, sheep, and poultry. The upper platform is entirely open, and dedicated to passengers of the third class. The parlour-people pay twelve sous ; those on the open deck in front of them, six sous ; and those on the upper deck only three sous ; the latter station was crowded. Indeed every part of the raft seemed to be fully occupied. It presented a most extraordinary appearance altogether, from its Noah-like simplicity, belonging to the antediluvian ages, and yet propelled by the most admirable of all inventions appertaining to the time in which we live. It moved forward with great rapidity, the mouth, if such it might be called, formed between the two prows, swallowing the stream continually, which it discharged in foam behind, after being operated upon by the paddles. The helmsman exercised a complete control over its movements, directing it here and there, with the utmost facility, amongst the islands and near the villages, to take up fresh passengers. Its slender chimney, its burthen of animals of every degree, its reappearance after be-

ing occasionally lost among the islands, the rusticity of its form, very plainly constructed and painted all white, its great velocity, as it seemed, from its slight draught, to skim over the surface of the stream, attracted general admiration. It looked like a peasant-girl endowed by nature with all the solid and useful accomplishments of civilized life.

There are two of these rafts which ply three times a-day between La Bouille and Rouen. Except so far as the steam machinery is concerned, they are said to be very old acquaintances of the Seine in this direction, their existence being traceable as far back as the middle of the seventeenth century; they are called by the Normans “boat-coaches,” *bateaux-coches*.

I ought to have before noticed, a little beyond La Bouille, the village of Moulineux, seated on the declivity of a mountain, behind which extends the forest of La Lande, celebrated in the middle ages for the robberies and assassinations of which it was the theatre. On the summit of an abrupt hill are seen the ruins of an old castle built by one of the Dukes of Normandy to defend the passage of the river; it is called the castle of Robert-le-

Diable, of whom many traditions are related, demonstrative of his perfect right to the title which is added to his name. The frowning forest of La Lande was the favourite scene of his adventures ; from its dark recesses he rushed out upon the travelling merchants of those days, and, after plundering them of their property, he conveyed them into its shades, whence they never emerged again. The beauteous and retired banks of the Seine were in those days much sought after, as sites for convents and monasteries, by the religious of both sexes. Amongst other audacious feats ascribed to Robert, it is told that he broke periodically into the nunneries in his neighbourhood, selected its most attractive inmates, bore them away to his bowers in the interior of the forest, and, after rendering them the victims of his violent passions, dismissed them with their bosoms mutilated in the most barbarous manner. This outlaw is not to be confounded with another Duke of Normandy, the father of the “Conqueror,” who lived some three hundred years after ; and who, for some reason or another, bore occasionally the same title, although the reverse of the fiend in all things.

We landed at Rouen soon after one o'clock, and, having taken up our quarters at the Grand Hotel, we proceeded forthwith to see the "lions" of the place, under the auspices of an English Cicerone, the least talkative of the Tullian race I had yet encountered. Rouen is undoubtedly one of the most interesting cities in Europe. Its situation, in the midst of undulating hills, teeming with natural wealth, and diversified by scenery of the most enchanting description; its famed cathedral and churches; its narrow lofty streets, built in the fantastic styles of the middle ages; the many curious old wooden edifices which strike the eye in every quarter, present to the traveller many objects well calculated to arrest his attention and to gratify his curiosity.

It may be remembered that a few years ago, a great part of the principal tower of the cathedral was struck down by the electric fluid during a tremendous storm. The damage has been since repaired in a most extraordinary manner—a manner peculiarly French. An imitation of the former summit, which was remarkable for its light and airy appearance in consequence of its being pierced

through in every possible direction, has been framed in *cast-iron*; and this awful pile has been planted on that portion of the old tower which survived the tempest. I say *awful*, because it is calculated to attract the lightning so powerfully when the storm shall again collect its force in the neighbourhood of Rouen; and, should vibration take place, and the mass tumble, as it seems always threatening to do, the devastation it must produce would be terrific. The difference of its colour from the lower part of the tower, and from that of the sacred edifice in general, is a deformity which no lapse of time can remedy.

The interiors of the cathedral, and of the church of St. Ouen, their richly-painted windows, their vaulted roofs, their chapels, monuments, and altars, we had merely time to glance at. They are so celebrated for the effect which they were intended to produce—the instant diversion of the mind from the ordinary affairs of life, and the impulsion of its faculties to the contemplation of all that awaits us in other worlds—that, even had leisure permitted me to examine them in detail, I should have reserved the memory of them in my own bosom.

The subjects have been made so common-place by architectural tourists and professed book-makers, that I could scarcely hope to redeem them from the jargon in which they have been involved. There is a holy water vase at the entrance of the church of St. Ouen, which is called the magic mirror—a name it well deserves; when quite full, as it happened to be when I saw it, it reflects the whole roof so perfectly, that you feel, while looking upon its surface, as if the beauteous pile were suddenly turned upside down. The vessel is placed precisely in the spot in which alone this optical effect could have been created; its position is said to have been entirely accidental.

Tokens of the new industry of France are abundantly manifest in the new buildings which are seen by the river-side, and in the various manufactories which have been erected at a short distance from the town. The new custom-house is a superb structure. It is a careful provision of the authorities that the manufactories should have been kept at some distance from the town. They are ranged one after another with gardens and fields between them, so as to mitigate the nuisance of their smoke

as much as possible. The river in front of the magnificent quay was crowded with shipping of considerable burthen. A new suspension bridge, the quay covered with all kinds of merchandise, numerous shops filled with goods set out in the most tempting array, many having long streamers of gaily-coloured silks and cottons suspended from the upper windows, streets constantly traversed by cars, and waggons, and carriages, and a population intent upon business, served at once to indicate the decided change which has converted a strong military fortress into an emporium of trade.

Before the revolution of 1789 Rouen was a place of ramparts, ditches, castles, towers, bastions, casements, drawbridges, and fortified gates. All these emblems of strife have nearly disappeared. The ancient physiognomy of the town has been wholly altered; with the exception of the churches and the old wooden houses, few things now remain to attest the antiquity of this once formidable stronghold of the Norman dynasties.

We dined at the *table d'hôte* of our hotel—which, by the bye, I would recommend all travellers to do, for a better-served table I have sel-

dom seen in France—and, in the evening, drove as far as we could, and walked the remainder of the way, until we completed the ascent of the hill of St. Catherine, which commands a complete view of Rouen and of the country in its neighbourhood. The prospect fully repaid our toil. The sun, which was just setting behind the town, lent a solemn lustre to the roofs and steeples of the sacred edifices with which Rouen abounds, the high narrow streets being at the same time involved in shade. The winding river was seen to a considerable distance, here covered with shipping, there stealing its course through green pastures, now darkening under the coming night, now borrowing the red and purple colours of the clouds which canopied the descending orb.

The ground on which we stood was once a fortress; a portion of its castle still remains standing, though much shattered by the lightning. The walls are overthrown and covered with grass, and the mounds visible on all sides clothed with verdure, bear witness to the importance formerly attached to the possession of this hill by the chivalrous rulers of Normandy. Villas and new houses

of various descriptions appeared to be in progress of erection in the suburbs, and, had it not been for that terrible eye-sore—the cast-iron topping of the cathedral tower—I should have said that the picture presented to our view combined features of beauty and grandeur scarcely excelled by any other city I have seen in Europe—Constantinople and Naples only excepted. That monstrosity does all it can to mar the magic of the scene.

The traveller should not fail to visit the place where the Maid of Orleans was so iniquitously sacrificed, the more especially as near it he will find a remarkably curious old mansion, called “The Hotel du Bourgtheroude,” which has puzzled all the antiquaries who have yet written about Rouen. On two of the walls of the court-yard are some bas-reliefs, executed in the rudest and most clumsy style of the art, and yet possessing a fastastic boldness and an expression of character which strongly rivet the attention. One set of these carvings represents the celebrated interview between our Henry the Eighth and Francis the First. The attempt to exhibit in stone the field spread with the cloth of gold is very droll. The

figures of the kings and their attendants are really well laboured out, and several of the horses are chiselled with no common spirit; but the whole scene presents an aspect irresistibly comic. The other compartment of the work is occupied with pictures of pastoral life—men cutting down corn—mowing hay—ploughing—driving sheep to the fold—and following the various avocations of the country. The whole scene reminded us of the clown at Astley's theatre, who imitates the master professor of the circus with a dexterity which, though rude in its way, is still well worthy of the laughing admiration it seldom fails to acquire.

The museum, also, of Rouen, and the public library, offer many objects worth inspection. The former contains a considerable number of paintings, the gift of Napoleon, selected from the Flemish, Dutch, German, French, Italian, and Spanish schools. In the library it is stated that there are above a thousand manuscripts, amongst which I had the good fortune to get a peep at the celebrated “Gradual,” written by a Benedictine monk, and illuminated in a style of matchless elegance. A Garadul is a volume which contains a series of

anthems, chiefly in the Gregorian note, and used at mass and vespers in the Catholic church. The first letters of the anthems are ornamented with designs of the most exquisite beauty. The work, which is upon vellum, is said to have employed the leisure hours of the writer during a period of thirty years. The museum and the library occupy apartments in the ancient Abbey of St. Ouen, an extensive as well as a very stately edifice, which has been used for several years as the *hôtel de ville*. There are large gardens attached to it, which, though now used as a public promenade, seem to have been well calculated to encourage religious meditation. The views from the library windows of the mountains in the neighbourhood of Rouen are pregnant with all the charms of tranquillity.

It will be confessed, I think, that we were not inactive during our short stay at Rouen. A fortnight or three weeks might, indeed, be very pleasantly engaged in examining this most interesting town and the scenery for some leagues around it. We had but a few hours to devote to any such purpose. We remained there but one night. Quit-

ting our beds at the early hour of three the following morning, we embarked on board the "Dorade," so called from the fish of that name (the John Dory, as we style it), which is said to be abundant in this part of the Seine, and also of a peculiarly fine flavour. The "Dorade" is an iron steamer, about two hundred English feet in length, and at midships twenty feet across, exclusive of the paddle-boxes. It terminates in a point at both ends, and is of forty-horse power. We found but few first-place passengers on board. There were, however, some twenty or thirty sturdy-looking rustics in the rear, rather above the order of labouring peasantry, and yet not quite the yeoman in appearance. I was told that the average daily number of passengers by the boats which ply from Rouen to Paris was about fifty. The first places are twelve francs, the second nine. There is a restaurateur on board, so that, as in the "Normandie," you can dine very much according to your own taste. The "Dorade," as well as the other boats on this station, are necessarily narrow, as they have to pass through the arches of several old bridges, to the

builders of which it never occurred to make any provision for iron steam-boats.

We did not get away until about half-past four A.M. The morning was remarkably cold, considering that we were near midsummer. The wind blew keenly from the east, and compelled us to wrap ourselves in our cloaks. The ruin-crowned eminences on our left teemed with the histories of sieges and battles of former days; in the midst shone out the pretty chapel of the Virgin, seated, as if to witness the meek triumph and uninterrupted continuance of religion through all the vicissitudes of barbarian ages. The banks of the river on our right were low and evidently subject to inundations, which, although they contributed to fertilize the land, left behind them marshes, said to be productive of malaria. An enormous winding of the river took us down to Elbeuf, and then up in a parallel course to Pont-de-l'Arche. Elbeuf has been long celebrated for its fine cloth manufactures. The revocation of the Edict of Nantes suspended their prosperity for some time, by compelling its inhabitants, who are principally Huguenots, and almost all engaged in that trade, to take refuge in Eng-

land. During the early stages of the Revolution, however, the factories gradually resumed their former activity ; they extended rapidly after the separation of Belgium from France, and they now afford occupation to five or six thousand persons of both sexes and every age. The town is very agreeably situated in a valley, overlooked by a chain of mountains, well wooded throughout their whole extent.

One of Prout's most picturesque sketches of the Seine is the Pont-de-l'Arche. A fine old bridge of twenty arches extends from a little above the confluence of the Seine with the Eure, and at the same time passes over three branches of the former river. It is said to have been erected so long ago as the year 854. An ancient mill and church come with great effect into the picture, and render it, perhaps, the most interesting object between Rouen and Paris. Amongst our English companions on board, I detected one of our most accomplished artists, in consequence of the enthusiasm with which he admired this scene, and of the happy phraseology which he used in pointing out its most striking features to his wife and two female friends by whom he was accompanied. He turned out to

be an old acquaintance of Mr. Forster ; and so we all forthwith concluded a league of friendship, as if we had known each other a hundred years. Mrs. M—— was, if I might say so, quite a devotee to the beauties, and still more to the antiquities and legends, of the Seine. She had traversed it repeatedly—had stopped and roamed about for days among its most storied towns and villages—had collected many traditions from the elderly people whom she had met everywhere—and was full of all sorts of information, which to me was new and exciting. The party, moreover, did me the favour to say, that they had been already rendered quite familiar with me through my voyage on the Danube. It is indeed a compensation for many of the ills of life thus to meet persons, strange to my eye most friendly to my heart, by reason of the communication previously established between us through the instrumentality of literature.

The bank on our right, hitherto monotonous, began to be varied by bosomy undulations, soon after we quitted Pont-de-l'Arche. Through some of these eminences chalk formations occasionally broke out ; but, for the most part, they were clothed

with verdure, and presented at their feet lines of poplars, the picturesque character of which I had to defend against my fellow-voyagers, who almost continually denounced them as a nuisance.

From the poplars our attention was directed to a young French artist, who was sitting, as he conceived, in a most striking attitude, near one of the paddle-boxes, holding in his right-hand a tortoise-shell, silver-headed cane, his left arm akimbo, one leg thrown over the other, his hair hanging in thick ringlets over his shoulders, and on the top of his head a little soft, yellow, round hat, or rather cap, with a narrow edge turned in all round. The hat was less on the top than on the side of his pericranium, where it hung with an air of coxcombry that was exquisitely ludicrous. This is a style which has been recently affected by the young artists of France. The cut of the coat is also peculiar, the object of the whole costume being to imitate the portraits of Raffaelle as closely as a slight deference to modern fashion will permit. Thus they separate themselves from the general mass of the community ; wherever they meet they are enabled to recognize each other, and they flatter themselves

that their moustaches and whiskered cheeks and chins, aided by a studious, pensive, languishing look, render them irresistible to the ladies. The inconsistency between the self-importance assumed by this specimen of “young France,” and his seat near the paddle-box, where he was mixed up with the motley groups of the secondary class of passengers, was not the least striking feature of the exhibition which he presented to my friend M—, who by stealth copied him off capitally.

Another character, or rather pair of characters, we had on board, consisted of an elderly French gentleman of the *ancien régime*, and his fat, dumpling-looking, neatly-capped and shawled house-keeper. He appeared bordering close on his seventy-fifth summer, enjoying a green old age, a buoyant cheerful temper, a good appetite, and his manners were of the most amiable and engaging description. His companion made him put on his cloak whenever she thought the wind blew too keenly—and, undoubtedly, he had much occasion for it ; as, although the sun shone out in a perfectly cloudless sky, whenever we became, by the windings of the river, fully exposed on the eastern side,

the cold was more piercing than I ever felt it even in December. If the temperature varied, she took off the cloak again, and, folding it up neatly, held it in her lap until he again required it. Her services were all performed with a degree of recognized authority, but, at the same time, with a manifest feeling of respect and affection which were beautiful in their way. When he slept, she shut her eyes and nodded too; when he awoke, she also brightened up, as if by magnetic sympathy. The contrast between them was complete—he a tall, slender, venerable, very gentlemanly-looking person; she a short, thick-built woman, cleanly and substantially dressed, a stout gold ring on the second finger of her right-hand, but altogether a personage much superior to our waitress of the “Normandie.” They breakfasted comfortably together on a potage, and a bottle of the best vin de Macon, which she recommended him to take in preference to another he had named. She thought, good soul! that the Macon would do him more good. I observed that she did not forget to help herself.

It is no uncommon thing for octogenarians in France to go about attended by *domestiques* of

this description ; in walking through the streets of Paris, they are followed by these faithful nurses, who carry their cloaks and umbrellas for them, and warn them at the crossings, lest they should knock a foot against a stone or be run down by a cab. When the master pays a visit, she sits in the hall, or in a separate room, maintaining a certain degree of state of her own, apart, indeed, from him, but also distinguished from the rank of a menial servant.

CHAPTER IV.

Conveniences of Steamers. Prolongation of Life. German Philosophy. Vernon. Animated Scenery. Paucity of Birds. Paddles of the Dorade. Roch-Guyon. Count d'Enghien. La Belle Mantes. Arrival at Paris.

By the bye, let us here observe one of the results of steam-navigation, with reference to its probable agency in extending the duration of human life. Assuming that the gentleman whom I have just noticed was obliged by his affairs to take a journey from Rouen to Paris—if there had been no steam-boat, he must have gone in the *diligence*, or posted perhaps in his own carriage. He appeared to be rheumatic, and very feeble; if he had been shut up in a carriage, and subjected to its motion, the effect upon his health could not have been otherwise than injurious; fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, would have tended to impair the little strength that remained to him; he might have had uneasy,

interrupted slumbers, but he could not have slept; whereas, on board the “Dorade,” he had his couch to go to when he pleased, whereupon to extend his limbs—he had the deck to walk upon—the open air to inhale—his meals when he liked—his bottle of Medoc—and his domestique to cloak or uncloak him, as the varying temperature of the day required. He suffered no more inconvenience in going to Paris by the steamer than he would have had to encounter in his own house. Let the insurance-offices look to it; steamers will, I suspect, be found no friends to their annuities.

Our secondary passengers appeared to be principally mechanics and agriculturists—all well-built men, in good condition, and comfortably dressed—especially the farmer-looking men, who seemed to have plenty of money. When the fare was demanded all round, they usually pulled out from their waistcoat-pockets a cotton handkerchief well stored with five-franc pieces. When the operation of payment was over—a duty performed on one side with a reluctance very little in keeping with the avidity betrayed on the other—they diligently knotted the handkerchief again, and stuffed it into

the pocket whence it had been drawn. The lump must have been inconvenient in such a place, but I presume they like it, as a constant evidence that their treasure is in safety.

As we glided along amidst scenery ever new and beautiful, we kept up a smart fire of conversation upon all sorts of topics—the transcendental school of Germany—to me an entire mystery—the pervasion of the electric soul of love throughout all nature, in which I am a firm believer—the faculty of consciousness bestowed upon all creatures, from man down to the most minute gnat that dances quadrilles in the sun-beams—of which said consciousness I am also a decided advocate, as a power of thought altogether separate from that which belongs to the human mind, and ceasing with the death of the inferior creature—the luxurious attractions of the John-Dory for my namesake, the well-known player—and a hundred other subjects.

We passed under a very handsome suspension-bridge, near Château Gaillard: the ruins of that celebrated castle present to the view a remarkably imposing and picturesque object. It was originally erected by our Richard Cœur-de-Lion, to de-

fend his Norman possessions against France. It was in one of its dungeons that Margaret of Burgundy was strangled for her debaucheries. Near it is the very beautiful town of Andelys, where Poussin was born. A little shabby house is shewn there, upon which lustre nevertheless dwells, because it is said to have been once the abode of Corneille—such is the power of poetry! Blanchard, the aeronaut, and Brunel, the engineer, are understood also to have first seen the light at Andelys. The hospital founded there by the Duke of Panthievre, grandfather of the present King of the French, is a most splendid pile, looking much more Oriental than European. Mr. M—— admitted that my cypress-looking poplars, grouped near this magnificent structure, added materially to its picturesque effect.

Winding up the river we reach the town of Vernon, which, from a petty village, was converted into a place of great strength by our Henry the First. An enormous tower, in which the archives of the district are now preserved, lifts its head like a hoary warrior of those sanguinary ages. The streets are wretchedly built, but the antiquity of

the houses, its very beautiful parish church, and its commanding situation, render Vernon an object of marked interest in the panorama through which we are moving. The bridge is one of the oldest structures of the kind on the river; in consequence of some concussion to which it was subjected, one of the arches was bent out of its place altogether; the modern restorer—instead of taking the whole arch down, left the deformity just as it was, and filled in the vacuum made by its displacement—a truly French idea, worthy of the men who conceived the idea of the iron summit to the tower of the Rouen cathedral.

By noon we experienced some approach to the genial temperature of summer; patches of grey cloud were scattered here and there upon a dark green sky; great numbers of swallows were sporting everywhere around us; on either side were fields of a rich emerald green, interspersed with patches of a yellow flower, the seeds of which yield oil. The contrast between the two lively colours, and the chasing of shadow after shadow as the clouds passed over them, lent to the scene a magical variety.

Out sounds the bell whenever we approach a village or a town ; then the groups assembling on the shore—the joy of friends meeting—the adieus of friends separating—the sudden disappearance of the one party from the other before they half finish the talk which they had just renewed—the whirl of the boat from fields glowing with herbage amongst rugged rocks or mural precipices of chalk, over whose snowy summits troops of jackdaws are hovering—habitations, and even churches, excavated in the hills—vineyards, planted on the slopes where the southern sun seems to sleep—the alternations of fertility and barrenness—the distant vistas through clumps of trees and through arches of bridges—the spires of churches, from which occasionally flies the tri-coloured flag—old high-roofed châteaus, with their straight avenues—these, and a thousand other objects in the panorama, the pencil in vain attempts to preserve. The slightest movement of the helm to the one side or the other imparts to the whole a new combination of features, which the wild deviations of the current again tend to diversify. Castles, and towers, and mountains appear to turn themselves round on all sides, as if

they were rivals in their claims upon our admiration; but lo! just as we are about to decide to which the preference ought to be given, they all, with a sort of flirting sauciness, bid us good-bye!

How very few birds one sees or hears in France! With the exception of the swallows and jackdaws just noticed, I saw none. At Rouen, I heard the cuckoo; but we all miss the twittering sparrow, the joyous thrush and blackbird, the goldfinch, and the other gay and musical visitors of our English woods and hedges. Absent too is that chorus of insects, which in the summer-time seldom fail to sing their vespers to the Creator in our own firmament.

Many questions have been lately raised as to the most advantageous mode of constructing steam-boat paddles. Experiments performed by direction of the Admiralty have developed a most unexpected result, clearly demonstrating that the paddle-boards hitherto employed have been much larger than is required, and that vessels have been most unnecessarily shaken and the engines strained in consequence. The constructors of the "Dorade" thought that they could not make her paddle-boards suffi-

ciently extensive. The arches of the bridges through which she had to pass somewhat restrained their ambition, but they endeavoured to compensate the supposed evil as far as they could, by giving the board a direction divergent from the axis. The consequence was, the vessel trembled through all her joints at every stroke. Another result was less disagreeable. The board struck the water at an angle, which threw off the element beyond the outer edge in an arch of sharp light particles. Observing this, I immediately looked for the prismatic bow beneath, and there I found it, larger or smaller as the course of the vessel changed in relation to the sun. Sometimes a perfect circle of the prismatic colours was formed in the bosom of the river; sometimes a bow which darted in and out. We amused ourselves by contemplating this additional proof, though none was required, of the solution which science has long since given of the phenomenon of the rainbow. A circle produced by similar causes I had never seen before, and I found that it was equally novel to the men belonging to the vessel.

But here we are at Roche-Guyon—a very remark-

able-looking place. It derives its name (Roche) from a very precipitous, indeed, almost mural, rock, at the foot of which a Sieur de Guy, or Guyon, built a château in the time of Louis le Gros. In the higher part of the rock a chapel was excavated as a place of sepulture for Guy and his family, and on the summit he raised a tower, from which he could command a view of the country round for many a league. The tower communicated with the château by a staircase cut in the rock. Since Guy's time many additions have been made to the old château by several members of the Rochefoucauld family, who, at a vast expense, have also formed extensive gardens and a magnificent promenade on what was formerly a barren mountain. This fortress—for such it was during the contests for Normandy between England and France—was gallantly defended by the widow of Guy, the sixth Lord of Roche-Guyon (who was slain at the battle of Agincourt), against the Earl of Warwick. The Earl respected her valour so much that he offered to leave her in possession of the place, if she would plight her allegiance to the King of England. She

refused the condition, and lost all her estates in consequence.

It was here that the Count d'Enghien (the conqueror of Cerisolles) met an ignoble death, his head having been crushed to atoms by a heavy box which was thrown down upon him from one of the upper windows of the château. Francis the First stifled all inquiry into this affair, lest it should turn out that the Dauphin and the Marquis d'Aumale (of the house of Lorraine) were implicated in it. A chamber is still preserved exactly in the same order in which it was when on one occasion Henry the Fourth slept in this château—the same bed—the same curtains—the same furniture—the same *fauteuil*, which he used. A suspension-bridge, remarkably light and graceful, spans the river here, the work of M. Boulland, civil engineer, who has been compensated by a grant of the tolls for ninety-nine years. It would be difficult to select, even on the banks of the Seine, which abound in beautiful sites, a finer locale for the country residence of a noble family than Roche-Guyon.

Wheeling round through the writhings of this most serpentine river, by the charming villages of Vetheuil and Rolleboise, we come within view of the parks and palace of Rosny, celebrated as the birthplace of Sully. It was also the favourite residence, at one time, of the present Duchess de Berri, who spared no expense in embellishing it. Everybody remembers the brilliant fêtes which she gave in that palace, with a view to strengthen her political position in France. *Sic transit!* An interesting monument of her charitable and kindly nature, however, still remains in an hospital for the invalids of the village, which she built in 1820. In the chapel of the hospital is a marble cenotaph, which contains the heart of the late Duke, pierced by the poniard of Louvel. Those were dark days for France, portentous of the storm which has since broken upon that country! Has it passed away?

Away with politics. On to La Belle Mantes, as it is most deservedly designated. The approach to the town is truly superb. Give me, ye gods! some pencil that will duly paint that bridge on our left over an arm of the Seine—the busy mill in its central arch—the long vista through groves through

which we gaze upon it—the church beyond it—the two towns of Mantes and Limay, which at first seem one, until our course round a promontory dissipates the delusion—and then a second bridge, invisible before, eminently picturesque, and then a second and a third church, with their lofty old towers, and, beyond all, a long, long line of poplars bearing no foliage except on the very tops of their tall, slender stems, where their branches touching each other give them the appearance of a garland suspended in the heavens. We all felt as if we were under the influence of some enchantment, or of one of those modern operations of magnetism which are said to be capable of filling the soul with ecstatic visions !

The origin of Mantes is traceable to the druidical ages. It took a distinguished part in all the Norman wars. One of the most severe contests in which it was engaged was its defence against William the Conqueror, who claimed it as his own property. During the siege the Prince fell sick. His *embonpoint* being then somewhat beyond the ordinary bound—in an age when everybody was fat, if portraits are to be believed—the King of France

said of him that he was in labour, and that no doubt the ceremonies of his churching would be magnificent. "By the splendour of God," exclaimed the hero, when he heard of the sarcasm, "I shall be churched in Paris, and I shall be attended by ten thousand lances in lieu of tapers!" A fall from his horse, however, as he was, after his convalescence, riding through the burning embers of the town, put an end to his designs in this world.

Mantes has about it all that cheerfulness of appearance so well expressed in the French phrase *la jolie*. An air of elegance and mirth prevails through the beautiful promenades by which it is surrounded. The streets are neatly built. Limay, on the opposite bank, is connected with Mantes by two bridges—those which had such a baffling effect upon my optic nerves—an island in the middle of the river dividing it into two streams. One of the bridges is higher up the Seine than the other, a circumstance which added to the puzzling novelty of the whole picture, as it gradually unfolded itself to the view. Near Limay is a chapel, excavated in the mountain, called the hermitage of St. Sauveur,

to which crowds from all the country round perform pilgrimages every year on the 6th of August.

On we go through green pastures, margined here and there by banks of bright blue and yellow flowers, which we can almost pull as we pass. Troops of swallows again remind us of the summer we *ought* to have, and would have but for the horrible east wind. The birds look astonished at the volumes of black smoke which curl from our chimney-top, mingling with the white steam that issues from the safety-valve. The smoke, when it first bursts forth, uniformly spreads itself out in the form of a Prince of Wales's plume.

We arrived at Poissy at five o'clock in the evening. A very short canal, or an extension of the railway from St. Germain-en-Laye, would have saved a circuit of the river, which cost us, at least, an hour and a half of time. But such an improvement as this is not all at once to be expected in France. So the circuit we were obliged to make, by Achères, Audressy, Garennes, and Herblay, to Maisons, where the splendid residence of M. Lafitte comes suddenly on the eye.

Here is another striking proof of the changes oc-

curing amongst our neighbours in consequence of their commercial progress. Before the Revolution, the château of Maisons belonged to the Count d'Artois, the late Charles the Tenth, who had private apartments constructed in it for the use of Louis the Sixteenth and Marie Antoinette. It is built very much after the fashion of the palace of the Tuileries. Napoleon made a present of it to Lannes, afterwards Duc de Montebello, and it was purchased some years ago by its present possessor. It is truly a princely residence.

The extensive park belonging to this splendid domain has been lately divided into a considerable number of allotments, for the erection of villas and cottages in the old English style, such as we see in the Regent's Park village. But the ancient trees have not been all cut down, as they infallibly would have been by an English builder in the first instance. The old avenues and plantations are preserved as much as the advantageous disposal of the ground will permit, and with a view to the embellishment of the cottages constructed amongst them. More than a hundred of these charming country habitations have been already finished and

occupied. Being situated upon rising ground, they command ample prospects of the territory all round ; and as the journey from them to Paris, especially since the railway to St. Germain-en-Laye has come into operation, is reduced to a few sous in expense, and to less than an hour in point of time, they have been much sought after by the prosperous citizens.

We arrived at St. Germain-en-Laye at a quarter past seven o'clock ; landed, walked to the railway station-house in eight or ten minutes, and obtained there tickets in return for checks, which were put into our hands as we quitted the steamer. The charge for these tickets, which I believe is half a franc, was included in our fare ; so, of course, we had nothing to pay. The station-house is a magnificent building, and the arrangements for the accommodation of passengers appeared to me in every respect unobjectionable. There were a great many applicants for places : but no rude contentions—no pushing about—no disorder of any kind.

We entered the carriage indicated by our tickets, a roomy and well-constructed vehicle, without much show about it, and set off to the sound of a

trumpet, slowly at first; the speed then was gradually increased until it attained a velocity, at no time, I think, exceeding fifteen miles an hour. The trumpeter kept on sounding the whole way—a precaution that might be introduced into our railway arrangements with the most useful effect. The warning would be heard to a considerable distance; and if it had been in use here these last two years, it would have undoubtedly prevented many accidents of a most disastrous nature. The vibration of the train of carriages was somewhat more than I had been accustomed to in England.

We traversed the distance from the point of our departure to Paris in twenty-seven minutes. At the terminus, omnibuses were in waiting for passengers to all parts of the capital. We entered one, which conveyed us to the Rue de Rivoli for six sous: stopping at the gate of Meurice's hotel, we descended, and found ourselves in the *salon* of that most comfortable establishment, precisely at half-past eight o'clock.

In all my travels I never performed a journey

more delightful than this was in every way. We quitted London at ten o'clock on the Wednesday morning—reached Havre in eighteen hours, that is, at four o'clock on Thursday morning—stopped there until seven—embarked on board the “Normandie”—arrived at Rouen about one the same day—left Rouen on Friday morning at half-past four—and sat down in Meurice's hotel at half-past eight the same evening. Thus the possibility of fatigue was, I may say, excluded. We slept, ate, drank, walked about, nearly as we should have done if we had been at home; passed through a long succession of the most beautiful and diversified scenery in France, took a short survey of one of its most thriving ports, saw the “lions” in one of its most ancient and interesting towns, breathing all the way the fresh air of heaven, and the fragrance of myriads of wild-flowers, and feasting upon the records and traditions of former ages, of which we were reminded by old castles and monasteries, palaces, churches, ruins, mountains, full of the memories of robbers, warriors, holy men, statesmen, court intriguers, princes, kings, and dynasties

now no more. The whole, when I look back upon it as I now write, seems to have been a pageant of the middle ages, suddenly come, suddenly passed away, in the midst of the toils of a busy London life.

CHAPTER V.

Motives of Second Journey. A Florentine Gentleman. Travelling Companion. The late Mr. Bellew. Sir M. D. Bellew. Menai Steamer. A Minerva. A Snuff-man. Benefits of Snuff. Three Corsicans. A second Napoleon.

A FEW years after my excursion by the Seine to Paris, I was without much difficulty prevailed upon to visit some of the other rivers of Europe upon which the steam-engine had recently begun to display its miraculous powers. It was, undoubt edly, a great drawback to the pleasures I expected from such a journey, that they were not to be enjoyed also by my beloved family. But my daugh ters were not yet of an age to travel ; and the super intendance of their education demanded the pre sence of one who is herself the model of every thing I should wish them to be There was, indeed, not

long since, amongst us a boy who had scarcely attained his fifth summer, when once placing his hands upon my knees, and looking up at me with those eyes which Raphael or Murillo would, had they seen them, have wished to transfer to one of their cherubs, he demanded and obtained a promise, that when next I set out upon my travels I should take him with me. Little did I then think that he was soon to leave his favourite seat upon those knees vacant ; and that I was again to "set out upon my travels" without, at least, being importuned to perform my promise. But his years were already numbered ! Even the consolations which remained, most dear to me as they assuredly are, could not prevent that calamity from sinking deep into my heart. Grey and thinning hairs speedily gave evidence of a state of constitution for which change of scene and climate was prescribed as the most efficient remedy. This was another—and, I must confess, the more imperative—motive for the resolution which we adopted of separating for a season, under the hope that I should return in renovated health and spirits. That hope has been accom-

plished, through the favour of Providence ; and I therefore now proceed gratefully and cheerfully to write out the notes of my journal.

The spring of the year 1841, as well as the winter by which it was preceded, I had spent in Ireland—a country which I had been studying for some time, with a view to collect materials for a just representation of its actual condition and capabilities. Having seen my family comfortably established in the vicinity of Dublin, and within the immediate reach of friends whose attentions to them subsequently very much exceeded all that I could have anticipated, I sailed from Kingstown on the evening of the 20th of June, 1841 ; arrived in Liverpool early the following morning, and found myself soon after seated in one of the first-class railway carriages, by the side of a young Italian gentleman, who was on his way home to Florence, from the south of Ireland, where he had been visiting a noble family connected with his own by marriage.

His absence from Italy was, moreover, convenient for a while. He had been engaged in a duel

attended with some circumstances which brought the case under the notice of the tribunals. The lapse of some few months might, it was hoped, mitigate the hostility of his prosecutors, and so his friends thought that an excursion to the Emerald Isle might be attended with more than one good result, for they had heard of some rich heiresses being of marriageable dispositions in the quarter to which he was about to repair.

I found him a very agreeable, gentlemanly sort of person, frank in his manner, and open as the day with respect to his matrimonial speculations. His age did not appear much to exceed three or four and twenty years, although, for so young a man, the hairs were remarkably thin upon his head. He was dressed in a Greek red cap and a heavy great-coat, Greek also, with its usual appendage, the hood, and well lined with buffalo hair—a garment by no means too warm for the occasion ; though the month was June, the weather was of December. This duelling affair suddenly summoned him to Florence, and compelled him to suspend his operations for the establishment of a matrimonial firm, into which, he said, he could bring plenty of titles,

by way of equivalent, on his part, for the fortune that was to be contributed on the other.

Conformably with a previous arrangement, I met, in London, Mr. Bellew (eldest son of Sir Michael D. Bellew, Bart., of Mount Bellew, in the county of Galway), whom I had consented to take with me in my meditated tour. Those of my readers who have perused my “Steam Voyage down the Danube” may possibly remember the strong objections I expressed in that work to companionship in travelling, except under circumstances which would give me an entire control over my own time and movements, and afford me reason to expect that my fellow-traveller might prove acceptable to me in every respect. I had been long acquainted with Mr. Bellew’s family. I had held in the highest esteem and respect his late grandfather—a perfect gentleman of the good old school, distinguished for his most amiable character, his ardent devotion to the faith of his ancestors, his literary acquirements, all the domestic virtues, and an exquisite taste. Of his attachment to literature a splendid monument remains, in his formation of perhaps the largest and most valuable private library in Ireland. Proofs

of his taste may be seen in the picture-gallery which adjoins the library, but especially in the princely and picturesque demesne, which he may be said to have created out of a tract of territory that had been previously little better than a wild and barren waste. An extensive and unhealthy marsh was converted by him into one of the most beautiful lakes in the west of Ireland ; and often have I arrested my steps while walking on the margin of that magnificent sheet of water, to listen to the breezes of summer “discoursing their sweet music” amongst the oaks, the firs, the elms, and the lindens (the children of his spirit of enterprise), now waving over vast spaces which the bog and the fen had for centuries claimed as their own. Such are amongst the wonders which a resident intelligent, generous landlord may effect in a country abounding in capabilities of the highest order ; but which are most strangely overlooked by capitalists, who feel little hesitation in lending their millions to foreign—often insolvent—states.

My destined companion was still further recommended to my good opinion by the sincere friendship which I have long entertained for his father :

of whom I shall say nothing more than that he worthily fills the position he occupies in the line of an ancient and ever virtuous family—a position which may well be envied by those who visit him in his hospitable mansion, enjoying the affections of a most estimable lady and of a numerous family, all remarkable for their intellectual endowments. The attachment of his tenantry attests his demeanour as a landlord; their comfortable—indeed, I might add, so far as the females are concerned, their gay, and peculiarly becoming—dresses, when they assemble at the markets and chapels, furnish ample tokens of their general prosperity.

Behold my young friend and myself, then, embarked on board the “Menai” steamer, commanded by Captain Townley, and bound for Ostend. This boat was built as a yacht for private use; it was fitted up with every attention to neatness, and, though the principal cabin was small, it had an airy, pleasant appearance, which we accepted in compensation for that defect. As we left the Tower-stairs, the cool temperature of the morning, and a clouded sky, predicted more of a winter than a summer day. We had some squalls, and, as the

hours advanced, they brought with them an easterly wind, which often made me wish I had borrowed from my railway acquaintance his Thessalian coat. Most happy should I have felt, even at the expense of the laughter with which I should have been greeted by the Misters, the Mistresses, and the Misses Bulls on our deck, had I possessed the opportunity of defending my proper person within the hood and ample folds of that most enviable production of Oriental skill.

Ungenial, however, as the day turned out, it did not prevent me from admiring the exertions which one of our fair companions on board was constantly making in order to make herself look pensive and romantic. As if awaking at times from her poetic visions, she started into attitudes which she must have thought as fine, graceful, and attractive as those of a Minerva, but which did, in fact, materially augment the drollery of her appearance. Her only care on earth, beyond herself, seemed to be a dove and a canary, which were lodged in separate apartments in the same cage. I could not observe that she had any other companions. She appeared to entertain no sort of doubt that her own dear self

and her two birds were the objects of general admiration.

I was not a little amused by an elderly bachelor, who, after very kindly offering me a pinch of snuff in return for a newspaper which I lent him, entered into a dissertation upon the salutary influences of tobacco, no matter how its essences were mingled with those of the human system, whether by inhaling as smoke, or snuff, or imbibing during the process of mastication. I follow his own technical language. He said that he had paid great attention to the subject, and had collected a number of facts which fully convinced him that those persons who constantly used tobacco, in any way, were generally long-lived people. For his own part, he preferred the snuff mode of consumption, and, under the hope that he should be enabled, by his doctrine, to add a few more years even to the ordinary term of longevity, he carried a box in each of his waistcoat pockets, one filled with snuff somewhat less pungent than the other, both highly scented. He delivered his discourse with a degree of complacency, as if he had perfectly satisfied himself that he had found out an infallible elixir for cheat-

ing nature out of a greater number of years than she had originally intended to give him. A round, ruddy, fat man he certainly was, of middle size, with a pair of gold spectacles on his nose, most probably a retired vender of snuff, and now, apparently, having no other occupation on this earth than enjoying, in due rotation, his two boxes, lecturing upon the same, reading the newspapers, and taking the best possible care to insure for himself a good dinner, with its usual appendages, and an agreeable bed.

A much more interesting spectacle than either of the solo performers just mentioned, was presented in the attentions paid by a gentleman to his wife, who appeared to be in one of the last stages of decline; not being able to remain below, she was obliged to have a mattress arranged on deck, upon which she lay almost incapable of motion. Though well wrapped up, it was beautiful to observe the vigilance with which her affectionate attendant endeavoured to protect her on all sides from the weather, and the ingenious contrivances of parasol and umbrella by which he sought to prevent the varying winds from visiting her cheek too roughly. He

was well repaid for his exertions by her sweet smiles, not the less sweet because her indisposition made them so languid.

The most remarkable characters on board were three Corsicans, who kept up a conversation amongst themselves during the entire day, and even to a late hour of the night, in a tone and manner indicative of more than ordinary excitement. They would have afforded excellent models to an artist in wax-figures for three regicides. One was of a singularly repulsive countenance ; his face, covered nearly all over with hair, and deeply pockmarked, betrayed, by its contortions, a mind excessively haughty and discontented, and turned for the moment into a cauldron which was boiling over with anti-English rage. His companions fully shared his atrabilious dispositions. One of them frequently endeavoured, by clapping a little hat on his head, folding his arms, and throwing furious glances around him, to look Napoleon. They permitted themselves to indulge in many expressions which might have led to disagreeable consequences, had any of our Hotspurs been on board who understood their Italian. Those who did understand it very properly abstained from

taking any notice of their conduct. There were hung up in the cabin two portraits—one, by some odd accident, of Mr. Attwood, M.P. ; the other, of the *Empereur*—the latter certainly bordering on caricature. The hairy-faced Corsican having once glanced at the latter picture, turned away from it with a fiery look, exclaiming that the English had made Napoleon appear a rascally London apothecary. I fancy that while recently in our metropolis the critic had had too much, perhaps, of the luxuries of the blue pill.

I should have liked much, had I been any thing of a painter, to have made a sketch of this group, and to put into contrast with it a troop of noble-looking boys who enlivened our deck by their gambols and their wild shouts of laughter. Their roguish smiles when they endeavoured to hide from each other behind a mast, or under a bench, their blooming animated cheeks, their sparkling eyes, their curling ringlets blown about in the wind, would have lent a fine light to the foreground, while the regicides might be disposed of in the dark distance, shadowy, fiendish, like the witches in Macbeth.

CHAPTER VI.

A City Man. A Traveller. Dinner. Ginger Beer. Empty Sounds. A Royal Salute. Arrival at Ostend. Church of St. Peter. Mrs. Trollope. Image of the Virgin. Mr. Beckford. Ostend. The Sluice-gates. Paret's Museum. Monstrosities. A Camera Obscura.

IT certainly seems to be my fortune, when travelling, to meet with a great variety of characters which stand out from the ordinary canvass of human life. Among my new acquaintances on board the “Menai,” I cannot pass by a “city man,” to whom my newspaper, which I had lent him, introduced me on this occasion. Upon ordinary subjects he talked with a sufficient degree of intelligence. But we had been scarcely five minutes in conversation for the first time, when he mentioned to me his name, adding that he had the honour and happiness of being a particular friend of Sir C—— —, “whom, perhaps,” he added, “you

know—or of whom, at least, you must have often heard."

"I think," said I, "I have heard the name before—was he not once an alderman?"

"Yes, the same, but his friends, amongst whom I am proud to feel that I am one, although I say it, of the most highly favoured, always call him Sir C———; it sounds better; he ought long ago to have been made a lord."

"You seem to admire him much."

"Admire him! there's no such man, Sir, in the world, in my humble opinion. Many a dish of turtle, and the best of venison have Sir C——— and I had together. And then to hear him, after dinner, talk politics. Lord bless you, Sir, he ought to have been prime minister, or, at least, Chancellor of the Exchequer, long ago. It is my humble opinion that in ten years he would have paid off the national debt, and then we should have had none of these reform bills which are now bringing the country to ruin. I verily believe England cannot last another year."

"Then what is to become of us all?"

“ The workhouse, Sir ; nothing but the workhouse, that is my humble opinion.”

“ But who is to support the workhouse, if we are all to be ruined ?”

“ Sir C—— ——, no doubt of it ; his plans must be taken up. Lord bless you, Sir, Billy Pitt was nothing to him. I always carry about with me a little book of which he condescended to make me a present ” (producing from his pocket a splendidly-bound volume, the title of which I forget) ; “ I always read it when I am upon what I call my *outings*.”

“ I understand — your little journeys of pleasure.”

“ Just so, Sir ; I like to see a little of the world. Last year I took a trip to Calais. I am an independent man—little cottage at Hackney ; only a maiden sister to provide for ; nice little garden in front ; a place for a few poultry behind. I like to hear my own cock crow of a morning, and to eat my own new-laid eggs ; a stable for one horse, and a little chaise, in which I go once a week to see Sir C—— ——.”

“ I suppose you are going to Brussels ?”

“ No, Sir ; I may, if I can find a cheap lodging, remain at Ostend three or four days, and then, perhaps, I may go to Dunkirk, just to see a little of the foreign world, as one may say. Perhaps, next year I may have my outing to Boulogne ; that’s the finest town in all France, Sir C——— says—except Paris.”

Our conversation was here interrupted by my snuff-elixir friend, who came to say that dinner would be ready in a quarter of an hour.

“ Capital intelligence !” exclaimed my neighbour. “ Have you any notion what they are going to give us for dinner ?”

“ I took good care to find that out,” replied the aspirant octogenarian. “ Leg of mutton, boiled, with turnips.”

“ And, of course, caper sauce ?”

“ And caper sauce ; fine piece of roast beef—ducks—lamb—ham—fowl.”

“ Bravo !”

“ Salmon—green pea-soup.”

“ Oh ! delicious—nothing like good green pea-soup in the season—any sweets ?”

“ Plenty!—Gooseberry pies—plum puddings—custards—and all the fruits of the season for dessert.”

“ And, of course, London stout?”

“ The best Barclay and Co.”

“ And ginger-beer too?”

“ Excellent; at least, so they say.”

“ Now, gentlemen,” whispered our informant, “ if you would take my advice, you would come down with me to the cabin, and take your places in good time.”

“ And as I have travelled somewhat and seen a little of the world,” added the *outer*, “ let me recommend you not to sit near any particularly large dish. You are expected to carve it; and, while you are carving for so many, you are losing your own dinner.”

Really there was no exaggeration in the prophetic account I had received of our banquet. It was excellently cooked, and admirably served. The cabin was crowded; but, as we were down in good time, we had good places on a wide Ottoman, which was fitted up all round the side of the cabin; affording, by its cushions and softness, some idea

of the couches on which the Roman epicureans loved to recline when feasting on imperial sturgeon, and quaffing their Falernian wine. There is nothing to be compared with the keen sea-air for whetting the appetite. The lamb was exquisite, and the roast ducks particularly well-flavoured. My friend's two snuff-boxes were in full requisition, in consequence of his holding them up as possessed of so many virtues. The steward—a good-natured sort of man—was charmed by the praises which his dinner—very deservedly—received on all sides.

"Best dinner I ever had in a steamer," said the Hackney cottager.

"And to shew you my good opinion of your fare," subjoined the man of snuff, "here are my two boxes, take a pinch from each, I suspect such snuff you never had before."

The steward was all bows and smiling gratitude.

"I hear you have in your storerooms some excellent ginger-beer."

"I think you will find it good, Sir."

"Bring me a bottle."

"And me another," said the man of the world.

The bottles being produced, one was opened with a discharge which threw all the ladies into a state of consternation. They thought the boiler of the engine must have exploded. But a general burst of laughter followed, when it was discovered that although the sound promised beer of the first order, there was scarcely a drop of it in the bottle. The scene was truly ludicrous; my friend so eagerly holding out his glass across the table, and the steward pouring into it literally nothing. The second bottle was uncorked with similar results. A second peal of laughter, louder and longer than the first, instantaneously ensued. The steward was so much ashamed of his boasted beer that he retreated as quickly as he could with his empty bottles, amidst the uproar of the cabin, which was not at all diminished by a mischievous wag at the table, who, summoning the steward, gravely demanded at once, for his own immediate use, twelve bottles of "that excellent ginger-beer."

"Twelve bottles, Sir!" exclaimed the steward.

"Yes, twelve bottles; I calculate that the whole will produce, perhaps, one glassful."

The ladies began to be convulsed with laughter. The steward with difficulty was prevailed upon to produce three more bottles; but when the first and the second yielded no more than his original samples, and were even still louder in their explosions, there was scarcely a man in the company who was not obliged to hold his sides.

“Be off, be off,” they shouted to the confounded steward, “be off, unless you mean to kill us all.”

I saw no more of the steward until, having been awoke out of a sound sleep by the repeated sounds of cannon which came from a distance booming over the sea, I called to him to inquire the cause of this firing. He said that he believed it was a royal salute at Ostend,—the King of the Belgians having been expected to embark there on his way to England. And so the fact turned out to be. The solution of the mystery did not detract from the majestic effect of the artillery, sending forth its greetings, echoing through the tranquil murmurs of the waves around us.

At half-past two o’clock on the morning of the 24th of June, we found ourselves at Ostend. We landed forthwith, and proceeded to the Hôtel des

Bains, which is designated upon its English sign-board as "The Bath Hotel." There being an arrear of the sweet restorer of life still due to me, I had the account adjusted as speedily as possible, after which I rose and went to the church of St. Peter, heard mass, and was charmed by the solemn and collected manner in which the divine service was performed. It was a "low mass," by way of distinguishing it from the same sacred function when celebrated with the accompaniments of the choir and organ. A boy, remarkable for the neatness of his dress and surplice, his graceful movements, and a gravity beyond his years, attended the priest. The sanctuary was surrounded, even on this week-day, with hundreds of the faithful, whose silent devotion gave at once a striking example of the general piety I was prepared to witness in Belgium. The church consists of a nave and two aisles, each of which is terminated by three altars of a very handsome and striking character. The stalls, the confessionals, and the pulpit are most elaborately carved in the admirable style of the middle ages.

It was in this church that Mrs. Trollope, when

upon her late tour through Belgium, beheld, placed on one of the altars, what she is pleased to designate as a “profanation” most vexatious to her “*reformed eyes!*” in the shape of an image of the Blessed Virgin, decorated after a fashion of which, perhaps, modern good taste would not altogether approve. Those who differ from the Catholic faith ought always to remember, that it is of a very ancient date; that images of the Virgin and saints can be no “profanation” in a church which has always sanctioned them; and that the drapery in which those figures are often arrayed is not of last week’s fashion from Paris. Mrs. Trollope might have soothed down her vexation if she had dwelt more upon the effect she saw produced by the very image in question; grotesque though it seemed to those “eyes” which, having undergone the process of “reformation,” must, of course, beam with an infinitely purer light than any Catholic orb of vision can ever hope to attain.

“ Yet, I was touched,” she says, “ by the *unmistakeable* devotion of a poor old woman, who kneeled on the pavement before it. Her withered

arms were extended, and an air of the most passionate adoration animated her sunken features as she gazed on the *frightful idol*." Now, Mrs. Trollope knew well, or, if she had questioned the poor woman, might have at once learned, that this image was no *idol* to her ; that it was not to the figure she addressed her prayer ; and that, in fact, she did not adore *it* at all, nor even the sainted personage whom it represented. No ; that orison was for the intercession with God of the Virgin Mother of His own Son, and the pious soul that uttered it only used the image as a material instrument for exciting, and preserving from distraction, the sentiments of contrition, humility, and hope by which she was at the moment actuated.

I say that Mrs. Trollope must have known all this well, for she adds immediately afterwards— “ After all, there is something sublime in the state of mind which allows not the senses to dwell on the object before them, but, occupied alone by the holiness of the symbol, is roused by it to such thoughts of heaven as chase all feelings but those of devotion. That this is often the case with sin-

cere Catholics I have no doubt ; and it is impossible to witness the feeling without losing all inclination to ridicule the source of it."

Mr. Beckford, whose account of his travels on the Continent towards the close of the last century, is unquestionably one of the most fascinating volumes in our language, would have been surprised, and, I think, much pleased, if he were now to repeat his visit to Ostend, which he has described as "a scurvy place," the favourite abode of "Dutch skippers and mongrel smugglers," its "whole atmosphere impregnated with the fumes of tobacco, burnt peat, and garlic." Far from answering to this description, Ostend now presents a cheerful, cleanly, and highly prosperous appearance. Under the auspices of the reigning family, it has become a much-frequented watering-place. There is a very handsome bathing-house close to the seashore, and an assembly-room accessible on very moderate terms, in which during the season balls are given two or three times a week. A promenade, commanding a fine view of the sea, has been constructed on the wall, which was originally erected as a protection against the inroads of that element.

It cannot be doubted that the sea is gradually retiring from the whole of this coast ; or perhaps, more correctly speaking, that every year adds to the accumulation of sand which the tides bring in and deposit there from time to time. In order to counteract this evil in some degree, advantage has been taken of a small river which finds its way through Ostend into the ocean, forming an estuary, the sides of which have been carefully planked up, while the waters of the stream are confined by dams and sluice-gates, which are opened when the river rises to a certain height within them. The rush of the torrent thus artificially created impels before it the newly collected sands, and keeps the passage free from the constant invasion to which it had been formerly subject.

These sluice-gates (*slas van slijkens*) are well worth a visit. Mr. Bellew, the Rev. Mr. Tyrwhit (one of our steam-boat acquaintances, a near connection of the well-known Usher of the Black Rod), and I took a carriage to see them. They are admirably suited to their purpose, and kept in the most perfect order. They are little more than an English mile from Ostend, on the road to Bruges,

and not far from them is a very neat-looking rustic inn, which, besides its hospitable attractions, presents to travellers who love to contemplate the productions of nature, many objects extremely curious, and some rarely to be met with elsewhere. They are the more interesting as having been chiefly collected and preserved by the proprietor of the *auberge*, M. Paret, a most intelligent person, who, without any advantages of education, and actuated solely by his enthusiastic attentions to those operations of nature which escape the eyes of the great majority of mankind, has through a course of not many years assembled in his apartments between four and five hundred objects, some of which have been presented to him, others he has purchased, but by far the greater number he owes to his own industry and self-acquired skill.

His monsters are the most perplexing I have ever seen, inasmuch as several of them exhibit limbs and parts not of the nature of the parent which produced them. A calf with one of its feet only on the ground, and another, together with its tail and ears, on its back, might have been the result of a mere malformation. But how can we solve the

mystery of a creature, which ought to have been a calf, bearing the head of a dog and the tail of a horse ? Near this is another calf, with only three feet, one of which is on its breast, the other two upon its right shoulder ; and then follow a foetus of a double calf, all its members mixed up together in a most extraordinary manner ; a cat with two bodies and one head ; and other objects of a very puzzling description.

M. Paret's collection of the sea, river, and land birds of his own neighbourhood deserves the observation of the visitor. He possesses a great variety of foreign blackbirds, reptiles, and insects. A single oyster-shell, weighing nearly one hundred and fifty pounds, may be ranked amongst his most rare curiosities. He has also a great number of interesting minerals, the productions of England, Saxony, Belgium, Hungary, Siberia, the Ural Mountains, the Alps and Pyrenees, the Cordilleras, Hecla, Vesuvius, Aleppo, and Australia.

After going through this cabinet mixture of curiosities from so many parts of the world, you are invited to take a survey of the living scenes around you, through the medium of a camera ob-

scura which the ingenious host has constructed on the top of his inn. Here were exhibited to us a woman running, as if for her life, along the bank of the canal—then a brace of travellers with knapsacks on their backs on the same road—then a whiskey, as the vehicle was formerly called, bearing a Darby and Joan, the dame driving—and then a dandy capering on the high road on a Belgian steed. The waters of the canal sparkled in the sun—the retiring waves left behind them sands that shone out all like the dust of gold—and the vessels gliding in the distance added not a little to the animation and beauty of the scene.

CHAPTER VII.

Ostend. Railway. Railway inconveniences. Bruges. Houses in Bruges. Bruges Ladies. The Chimes. Piety of the People. The Cathedral. Notre Dame. Statue of the Virgin. Hospital of St. John. Charity Sisters. Wordsworth. Southey. Hemling.

ON account of its frequent demolition during the stormy ages of war, Ostend, though of ancient existence as a place of consideration in many points of view, presents quite a modern appearance. Within these latter years its fortifications have been repaired and greatly extended, in pursuance of the arrangements made at the last peace. Such means of defence have now become almost useless, as they can stand but a very short time before the newly-invented instruments of hostility. Nothing looks ancient about the town save its churches, which, though not remarkable for their architectural attractions, awaken interesting trains of thought in the mind, as the venerable symbols of

a religion that has witnessed the ruin of so many kingdoms, the slaughter of so many armies, driven into combat against each other by the wild ambition and folly of monarchs and statesmen,—the fall of so many heroes, whose *glory* (?) has long since vanished into oblivion,—and yet survives all these successive events, dwelling apart in her own tabernacles, amidst contending nations, ever brilliant and moving round her own unshaken centre, like the sun itself above the storms of our firmament.

A magnificent canal extends from Ostend to Bruges; it is nearly three times as wide as those we are accustomed to in England. I should have much enjoyed a passage upon it, had not the railroad been at hand, to accomplish in thirty minutes a journey for which the *Trekschuit* would have required at least three hours. The mere personal transit by the new mode of conveyance is in every way agreeable. The fares are economical; the carriages, both of the first and second classes, roomy and comfortably fitted up; the passengers are everywhere treated with the utmost civility; and such accidents as those which are, or at least

have been, of frequent occurrence in England, are almost never heard of.

But in other respects the railway system in Belgium is attended with an inconvenience which English travellers, particularly those who speak no language save their own, find extremely objectionable. Every article of luggage, no matter how trivial, must be sent beforehand to the office to be weighed. Very often, the charge for luggage is more than double the fare. Moreover, when weighed, it is taken possession of by the officers of the establishment, and, after being numbered, is huddled away with the luggage of all the other passengers, in such a careless manner, that boxes of frail materials are not seldom broken in the operation—no very pleasant result for ladies who choose to go on tours through Belgium with more than one bonnet. And then the confusion that follows, when, arrived at the station where the passengers wish to stop, they proceed to claim their effects, amidst a motley crowd of persons, all clamorous for their respective trunks, bags, and band-boxes, is really distressing, indeed so much so, that it is

scarcely practicable for a female who takes even the necessary quantity of apparel with her, to use the Belgian railways without feeling very great annoyance. In every other way, however, she would have little, indeed nothing, to complain of.

We were conveyed in fifteen minutes over a distance of as many English miles in the railway from Ostend to Bruges—so called, it is said, from the Flemish word *Brug*, a bridge, a wooden construction of that kind having, in former ages, spanned one of the canals which flow through that truly venerable city. Near the bridge was an ancient castle. While surveying some of its principal streets, my first impressions led me to see in it a resemblance to Venice. The annals of both these once celebrated marts of commerce speak alike of high prosperity in the middle and later ages, and of subsequent decline almost to a state of ruin. But the old capital of Flanders does not bear about it so many tokens of decay as Venice. Her canals are not stagnant, nor gloomy, nor traversed by the mysterious gondola ; nor has she a deserted Rialto, nor a Bridge of Sighs. Absent from her, too, is that complexion of profound grief, which looks like

remorse for centuries of corruption and crime. On the contrary, there are mingled with the sombre shades of her picture warmer and brighter colours, which appear to reveal a spirit of religious resignation and hope, that the days of her restoration to a more fortunate state of existence are not far away.

The houses in the leading, and even in some of the retired streets, all remain as they were originally erected, and in excellent preservation. They reminded me at once of the engravings I had so often seen of Amsterdam,—lofty, fantastic gables, extensive fronts, abounding in curious sculptured pictures of various legends, different modes of life, and scenes of battle with the old instruments of war. I expected every moment to behold a knight in full armour riding by, and young maidens, having for a moment escaped from their vigilant duennas, peeping through the lattices. The peeping system is now very generally aided at Bruges by small mirrors, so disposed outside the windows, that the fair prude within may, while concealed herself from observation, espy every person who passes near her residence. The damsels of this

place were formerly much celebrated for their beauty :—"Formosis Bruga puellis." I am ready to throw down my glove before any person who would say that their character has declined in this respect. Their figures and countenances are generally quite captivating. I saw an elderly lady—a most comely person—with a very slight *soufflon* of rouge on her cheek—dressed in a charming cap, a black silk mantilla, a ruby satin gown, fan in hand, ringing at the door of a palace, as the mansion may be designated, where, I presume, she was about to spend the evening. She was perfectly in keeping with the whole aspect of the scene.

One cannot be an hour in Bruges without being delighted with the music of the sweetest of all the carillons of bells in the Netherlands. They not only ring in the hours in pleasant sounds, but, on some occasions, make the smith himself suspend his ever-going hammer, to listen to the pieces of music which these chimes are taught to play. They represent on a large scale the machinery of a musical box ; but in addition to this, they may be also rendered obedient at any time to the skill of a performer who chooses to vary their usual tunes.

Those tunes are changed once a year, about the time of Easter. The instrument is placed in a remarkably lofty tower, called “Les Halles.” Hence the bells, when heard below, come on the ear with all the softness and sweetness of a lute. The interpolations of pleasing images with which they so often interrupt the grave cares of the day are peculiarly calculated to diffuse through the city a tone of sprightliness. If that be their object, they have undoubtedly accomplished it, for I observed very generally an amenity in the features of the good people of Bruges which placed them at once very high in my esteem.

Had even that pre-engaging look been wanting, I should have loved them for their most edifying—I might justly say their enthusiastic—attention to their religion. Solemn functions happened to be celebrated in several of the churches on the day of our arrival, in consequence, I believe, of numbers of children of both sexes having been on that day admitted to their first communion. The streets were filled with processions of these happy little beings, the females all arrayed in the white veils which they had worn at mass in the morning. I

saw them on their way to vespers, which were sung in the cathedral.

If Bruges has preserved its ancient celebrity for the beauty of its women, so has it also handed down in a state of admirable preservation all the splendid churches which the munificence of its once numerous and opulent merchants elevated to “greater glory” of the Omnipotent. Externally the cathedral, however, founded by St. Aloysius, who first preached the gospel in that country, is by no means attractive. It is constructed of brick, and, like many of the churches in Belgium, and even in Italy, wants the portico. The nave is also rather short in proportion to the magnitude of the choir ; but its internal ornaments are truly magnificent. It abounds in paintings, many of them of distinguished merit. There are also two very remarkable bas-reliefs in wood, painted and gilt, executed with wonderful attention to details, and in a state of perfect preservation. They represent St. Aloysius in his episcopal apparel, holding in his hand a plan of the church. At his feet lie a crucifix, a model of a cathedral, and a representation of that without the aid of which no church of any

style can be built; *viz.* a sack of money. This beautiful piece of carving is said to be the work of Taminn, celebrated for his skill in this department of the arts, which was so much cultivated in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The choir is ornamented with beautiful cartoons, executed by Vander Borght.

The church of Notre Dame possesses a statue of the Virgin, which no person should pass through Bruges without seeing. It is in marble, from the chisel of Michael Angelo. Like others of the most celebrated sculptors and painters, he appears often to have forgotten, when depicting the members of the Holy Family, that they were of the tribe of David. The Jewish features are not at all discernible in this statue. The head of the Virgin is quite Italian. The hands of the two figures of which the statue in question is composed are particularly beautiful. The drapery of the Virgin is arranged with so much attention to gracefulness—a character not usual in Michael Angelo's majestic productions—that it has given rise to some doubts as to the authenticity of the work.

The history of this statue is curious. It is said

to have been originally intended for a church in Genoa, but that the vessel which was carrying it from Civita Vecchia towards its destination was captured by a Dutch corsair, and taken to Amsterdam. A Bruges merchant there purchased it at a very low price, and upon his return home, presented it to the church of Notre Dame. This is the statue for which Horace Walpole is said to have offered thirty thousand florins.

But the gem of Bruges is the hospital of St. John. It is under the care of an order who devote all the time not required for their religious duties, or the ordinary necessary routine of life, to the patients received within the walls of this ancient and most admirable institution. One of its very attractive features is the perfect state of its preservation through many ages; the delicate cleanliness of the apartments is a model for all buildings of that description. To see the Sisters of Charity move about in their own grave and collected manner, going through their appointed offices, not like mercenaries, but as if they were the nearest relatives of the persons upon whom they were in attendance, must of itself afford a healing influence to the bed of

sickness. We saw a young sister, rather remarkable for her beauty, dressing the wounds of a very fine-looking soldier, who had been serving in Algiers. He was rapidly approaching convalescence, and his eyes beamed with gratitude for the care with which his protectress wound the bandages round his foot. She seemed pleased to observe that his health was so rapidly reviving, and yet, on neither side was discernible the slightest approach to a mere human affection. It was plain that the invalid felt that all her care of him originated solely in the pure spirit of her order.

While we were going over the curiosities in the church of the hospital, the guide conducted us, with an appearance of mystery, as if he conceived himself to be highly privileged in being intrusted with the care of so great a treasure, to a remarkably curious antique, called “la châsse de Sainte Ursule,” a kind of cabinet, about three feet long, and broad in proportion. The lid is of a conical form. The sides are divided into panels worked in gold, which represent the massacre of St. Ursula and the eleven thousand virgins, by the Goths, at Cologne. It is ornamented with paintings by

Hemling, a celebrated artist, who was for a long time an inmate of the hospital. He was a native of Bruges. In the early part of his life, the dissipations in which he indulged rendered him miserable. He enlisted as a common soldier, and having been wounded on the field, he was conveyed to the hospital. He had already shewn taste and talent as a painter; and after becoming convalescent, he resolved, out of gratitude, to spend the remainder of his days in the institution to which he owed the recovery of his health, and to dedicate all his time to its decoration.

The “châsse” is a sarcophagus in miniature. It is placed under a glass cover. The faces of the virgins are remarkable for the variety of their expression, and the sense of beauty by which they are throughout pervaded. It is said that the directors of the hospital were offered in exchange for this very curious work a shrine of the same size, in solid silver.

Bruges is a most interesting city in many points of view. Both Southey and Wordsworth have sung its praises. The latter has a sonnet upon it, in which he describes it as :

“The city one vast temple, dedicate
To mutual respect in word and deed,
To leisure, to forbearances sedate,
To social cares, from jarring passions freed.”

Southey writes of it in a much more animated strain.

“ Fair city, worthy of her ancient fame !
The season of her splendour is gone by ;
Yet everywhere its monuments remain ;
Temples which rear their stately heads on high,
Canals that intersect the fertile plain—
Wide streets and squares, with many a court and hall,
Spacious and undefaced—but ancient all.
When I may read of tilts in days of old,
Of tourneys graced by chieftains of renown,
Fair dames, grave citizens, and warriors bold—
If fancy could portray some stately town
Which of such pomp the theatre might be,
Fair Bruges ! I shall then remember thee !”

In the chapter-house of the hospital, the attention of the traveller will remain long fixed in admiration upon Hemling’s master-piece, the Virgin and Child with St. Catherine. It is enclosed in folding-doors, a custom which had long prevailed among the artists of the Low Countries, until the time of Rubens. The folding-doors were painted, and generally represented subjects more or less relating to the principal picture; but sometimes no

connection appears between them. The shutters of the painting just mentioned contain the decollation of St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist. I found it extremely difficult to quit this admirable production. On the outside of the shutters are the figures of several saints, whose faces are finished with all the minuteness and care that are usually observable only in miniatures.

CHAPTER VIII.

Mrs. Trollope. Church of the Capuchins. Attentions to Cleanliness. Capuchin Monks. Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Hôtel de Ville. Chapel of St. Basil. Mary of Burgundy. Her Monument. Curious Chimney-piece. Magnificent Prospect. English Convent.

As I have had occasion, in a former chapter, to animadvert upon Mrs. Trollope's description of an image of the Virgin, I am happy to have the opportunity of adducing here the generous evidence given by her in favour of the Hospital of St. John, and of the sisters to whose pious care the patients in that establishment are confided. "On leaving the chapel," she says, "I accepted the invitation of a Catholic lady to accompany her round the female wards of the hospital. The rest of my party declined joining us, from a fear of encountering disagreeable objects; but they were decidedly wrong. The pain which the sight, or even the

idea, of human suffering must ever occasion, was a thousand times overbalanced by the pleasure of witnessing the tender care, the sedulous attention, the effective usefulness of those heavenly-minded beings, *les Sœurs de la Charité*. It is they who are the only nurses in this large establishment. Unpaid, uncontrolled by any one, they give their lives to comfort and help those who would find neither without them. My idea of heaven is a place filled with Sisters of Charity. Perhaps I shall hear that I am turned Catholic, if I confess that the treasured symbols of that demonstrative faith, which I there saw so fondly cherished in the hour of suffering and death, touched my heart more than it offended my *orthodoxy*. The dying eye, expending its last beam in a look of confiding hope at the image of the Redeemer, at that moment suggested no idea of superstition."

The church of the Capuchins—like those of almost all the religious orders upon the Continent—pleased me much, on account of the perfect cleanliness and neatness of the sanctuary, and the care that appears to be taken of all the ornaments and utensils appertaining to the services of the church.

Visit those edifices at what hour you may, after the matin functions are over, and you will generally find a monk or two dusting the altar, re-arranging the burnished candlesticks, placing fresh cloths upon the altar-slab, laying down carpets, or doing one thing or another about the holy place, with that kind of activity and attention which indicates how much his heart is wrapped up in his labour. I have made it a point, whenever I could conveniently do so, to steal away from the bustle of the world on the vigil of a festival, and enter a convent church, where I should be sure to find preparations going on for the joyous celebrations that were to usher in the morning. I seldom failed to find the good brothers employed in suspending draperies round the choir, or on the columns of the sacred edifice; decorating the interstices between the massive gilt or silver candlesticks with vases of real or artificial flowers, beautifully arranged, and sometimes fixing festoons of flowers over spaces in the sanctuary, capable of gracefully admitting decorations of that character. Often the organist attends to try if the instrument be in tune; and after having satisfied himself on that point, he goes on pre-

luding, according to the ideas which his fancy suggests at the moment. One may always know that a festive function is going on in a convent church when extempore ebullitions of rejoicing resound from the organ in the intervals that occur between the anthems or psalms usually sung upon those occasions.

When I visited the Capuchin convent at Bruges, I was informed that the number of the brothers then residing there was twenty-one. They follow the rule of St. Francis of Assissium. They abstain from meat, eggs, and cheese. They depend almost entirely upon the voluntary contributions of the faithful. The primitive members of this order were forbidden to live in houses constructed of brick or stone; their appointed dwellings were huts formed of mud or osier, accessible to all the world, and devoid of any kind of door which could be made fast by a lock. These injunctions, of course, have fallen into desuetude. Their dress is a coarse brown woollen cloth, with the hood and girdle; their feet are slipped into sandals. The crown of the head is shaved, and the hair beneath that circle, as well as their beards, is generally remarkable for

the care which is bestowed upon its preservation. I observed some excellent paintings in their church.

Amongst the ecclesiastical edifices of Bruges, there is one which is always visited by travellers as a great curiosity—that which is said to bear a strict resemblance to the church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. It was founded by a pious Fleming, named Pierre Adornes, who is recorded to have visited Palestine three times, in order to assure himself that no error, even the most trifling, was committed in his imitation of that venerable edifice.

One of the most interesting amongst the public buildings in Bruges is the Hôtel de Ville, a very beautiful specimen, though on a limited scale, of the Gothic style. It was founded in the year 1377, by Louis de Maele, Count of Flanders, and was formerly ornamented externally by more than thirty statues of princes of Flanders and Burgundy. The principal windows were curiously surmounted or surrounded by arms and shields, and the whole presented a bijou, which even now looks unique, although, in the days of the French revolution, all those monuments of the arts were most wantonly destroyed by Dunourier and his Vandal myrmidons.

dons, who had them actually pounded into dust, as being, in his estimation, the effigies of tyrants, whose memorials were not to be tolerated.

Near the Hôtel de Ville is the chapel of St. Basil, remarkable for its antiquity and its extremely beautiful Gothic façade. Nothing can exceed the finished taste with which this façade is executed. At least a portion of the edifice is very ancient. While yet in its primitive condition, a nobleman of Alsace is said to have deposited in its tabernacle a drop of the blood of our Saviour, which he had obtained in Jerusalem. The more ancient part of the edifice is the crypt, or subterranean place of worship, the massive walls and columns of which partake of the Egyptian character. Over the door of the staircase which leads from the lower to the upper chapel is the figure of a pelican, surrounded by a Gordian knot, a mystical symbol of the redemption. The coffer in which the gift of the Alsatian is now preserved is a most splendid piece of workmanship, composed partly of silver gilt, partly of solid gold. On its sides are set several jewels of great value. The whole weighs nearly eight hundred ounces. Upon great festivals, the altar is

ornamented by a representation of Mount Calvary in massive silver, surmounted also by a silver cross, which is more than eight feet in height.

Every traveller of any curiosity who has visited Bruges, must, I presume, have seen the tomb of Mary of Burgundy in one of the chapels of the cathedral of St. Sauveur; and also the sarcophagus that is near it, containing the ashes of her father, Charles the Rash. They had both been formerly placed in the choir; but when Napoleon was in Brussels, in 1810, with the Empress Marie Louise, he left 10,000 francs to defray the expense of their removal to the chapel in which they are now placed. They are, in my judgment, much overloaded with enamelled shields and statues, and emblazoned arms. All this array of the “pomp of heraldry” ill comports, I think, with the solemnity that ought to reign among the dead. The history of Mary of Burgundy, however, imparts a peculiar attraction to her tomb. She was the last of the native sovereigns of Flanders. Being out hawking one day, she fell from her horse, and was so much injured, that she soon after expired. She had scarcely beheld her twenty-fifth summer when this accident

occurred; and her premature departure from amongst her people, who still love to dwell upon her memory, sheds a mournful interest round her monument. It is inscribed with the following epitaph :—“ She reigned as lady of the Low Countries during five years, for four of which she lived in tender affection with my lord, her husband. She expired, deeply deplored by her subjects, and by all who knew her, as was never princess before.”

On looking over several books of modern travels through Belgium, I have been surprised to find that many of their authors passed through Bruges without taking even a momentary glance at the very curious chimney-piece of the chamber of the court-house, specially devoted in former ages to the judicial business of the district called “ the liberty ” of Bruges. It is a master-piece of carving in wood, by an artist whose name, unhappily, is unknown. It is adorned with statues, nearly of natural size, of the Emperor Charles V.; of Maximilian and Mary of Burgundy, on his left; and on his right, of Charles the Rash and Margaret of England: these statues are all most exquisitely wrought. The historian of Bruges assures us that nothing like them

is to be found in the world. Behind them are seen the escutcheons of Spain, Burgundy, Flanders, and England. In the niche behind the statue of Charles V. are several beautifully executed medallions, containing, in profile, the portraits of Philip the Handsome, of his father, and of Jane of Spain, his mother. The lower part of the chimney-piece is in touchstone ; it is decorated by little genii in alabaster, and by the well-known scene in the history of the chaste Susanna.

Those ever-recurring chimes seduced me to ascend the tower in order to examine the machinery by which they are produced. While beneath it, the sound was, as I have already intimated, soft and clear ; but when I mounted above the cylinder, every note came upon my ear with a painful loudness. I should like much to learn from the calculations of science, to what height those sounds rise in the atmosphere before they die totally away. Pope, I think, it is, who sings of the “ music of the spheres.” Would not the perpetual circulation of the unnumbered orbs which are distributed through space yield harmonies that may be heard at the gates of heaven ?

The prospect from the summit of the tower is among the most magnificent scenes I have ever beheld. From the level character of the country all round, the eye ranges without any impediment to its view over an immense space of territory, reaching on the south the frontiers of France, and on the north, the shores of the German Ocean. Within these grand outlines may be perceived, under a favourable sky, such as we enjoyed, a portion of Holland, the spires of Ghent, and many rivers, canals, villages, forests, gardens, and cultivated fields, the latter clothed in all the diversified attire of summer, and slumbering in universal repose.

Not the least interesting part of this enchanting prospect was the city of Bruges itself, below, commanding the lines of all its streets, many of them animated by lindens and plane-trees, in full foliage; the roofs of all its buildings, the towers of its churches, the squares and promenades, the private gardens attached to convents and palaces, the railroads, with the smoke of their engines, now curling dark in the air, now vanishing from view, as the machine rushed away, like some sorceress gifted with supernatural power, to a distance whence it

was no longer discernible. To our eyes, thus on high, the moving men below were reduced to dimensions which made them appear ludicrously insignificant. For the moment, one thus elevated is surprised to think, that in the bosoms of such diminutive beings arrogance or ambition could find any room wherein to fix their abode.

Before leaving Bruges I paid a visit to the English convent, and was surprised by what I may justly call the splendour of the whole establishment. The chapel is a gem of itself, spacious, cheerful, elegantly decorated, the very emblem of a religious mind rejoicing in its purity and in the hope of future happiness by which it is animated. While I was engaged in admiring this charming oratory, the nuns and young ladies of the convent came in in procession to recite the Angelus and sing the Litany of the Holy Virgin. The noiseless step, the grave, collected, fervent demeanour of the veiled sisters ; the well-disciplined movement of the youthful train committed to their care ; the nicely-arranged hair, the modest dress, the graceful appearance of so many young English maidens, blooming in health and in their own native beauty, drew away for a moment

(God forgive me !) my attention from the shrine in which they were assembled to pay their devotions. Highly ornamented though it was, there reigned throughout a degree of simplicity and a feeling of repose which proved how well the architect applied his skill, with a view to render the temple what such an edifice ought ever to be, a house of prayer and adoration, rather than of theatrical display.

CHAPTER IX.

Ghent. Ladies of Ghent. Ghent Gentlemen. The Cathedral. Chapel of "The Lamb." The Palm Tree. English Candelabras. Episcopal Monument. The Crypt. Desecration of Churches. St. Michael's Church. Church of St. Nicholas. Oliver Minjau. The Theatre.

FROM these scenes of solitude and piety I reluctantly withdrew, just as the organ entoned the Litany. The steam-engines of the railroad have not in them one spark either of religion or romance —no consideration for any thing in this world, save the clock ; and so off we were, "bag and baggage," at a quarter to five P. M., for the ancient city of Ghent. Our way was through fields and gardens, full of the incense of flowers of every hue, and of corn not yet quite ripe for the sickle, standing almost as high as our carriage windows, yielding, as it waved under the influence of a light and balmy zephyr, a murmur which even our "*railing*" could

not wholly subdue. Now and then the scene was varied by our being whirled into woods, here and there interspersed with white cottages, from which issued groups of laughing urchins, who set up shouts as we passed, thinking no doubt that we came so far for their particular amusement.

The towers and spires of Ghent speedily presented themselves to view. From the circuitous course which the railway pursued, in order to avoid the undulations of the ground, it seemed as if we were about to pass by altogether the place of our immediate destination. However, we reached our terminus in due time, having been exactly an hour and a half upon the journey. The usual noise, trouble, and delay, arising out of the distribution of the luggage, having been gone through, we hastened away to the "*Hôtel de la Poste*," but could find no admittance there, the town being, we were informed, thronged with visitors on account of the approaching races and balls. After some search we obtained accommodation in a new establishment, the "*Hôtel de Paradise*," a most inviting title, of which the house proved itself by no means unworthy. The chambers were fitted up

with great taste, were cleanly, and cheerful; the beds were good, the attendance excellent, and our dinners were served in a most comfortable manner.

Much of the luxurious spirit of enjoyment for which Germany is famous, displays itself in Ghent. The men and women all appeared, as we should say of well-fed oxen, in prime condition. What was still better, they looked not merely contented, but happy. Shall I be ever pardoned by the Ghentian demoiselles if I admit that, in point of beauty, they must yield the palm to the ladies of Bruges? Would that I could, with a safe conscience, bear testimony that the fact were otherwise. But unhappily the difference is indisputable. On the other hand, the former carry the victory, so far as dress is concerned. Without subservience to any particular fashion, they display remarkable taste in the selection of colour and the style of their apparel, which presents an endless variety, never devoid of grace. The gentlemen, of whom I perceived a greater number (perhaps on account of the races) in Ghent, in proportion to the population, than in any other town in Belgium, appeared all to pay the utmost attention to their costume.

They wore, generally, the “cut-away coat,” buttoned tightly at the waist. Indeed, they required some restraint in that direction, wherein the usual consequences of good living were not easy to be suppressed. I was not a little pleased by their frank and free demeanour, and the confident, manly tone of their conversation. The more I knew of them, the better I was enabled to comprehend that fine old Belgic feeling of independence which was revived with so much reason and such entire success in the scenes of the late revolution.

The morning after our arrival being Sunday, June 27, we proceeded to the church of St. Bavon to hear high mass. The bishop of the diocese was present, and the service was performed in the most edifying manner, accompanied by a fine organ and several stringed instruments in perfect harmony. During the procession of the “Asperges,” before the commencement of mass, the head of St. John (the original tutelar saint), in silver, was borne immediately after the crucifix. The cathedral, one of the most spacious in Belgium, was crowded by both sexes, nearly in equal proportion. Their demeanour was of the most exemplary character.

The cathedral of St. Bavon is well known amongst architects as one of the oldest and most interesting churches in Europe. The earliest building, beneath which there is a crypt, is said to have been constructed in the ninth century. It was then called the church of St. John. But Charles V. having resolved to erect a citadel in the place where the ruins of the abbey of St. Bavon previously stood, he transferred the collegiate chapter of St. Bavon to St. John's. After that time the church took the name which it now bears. In compliance with a request made to him by Philip II., King of Spain, the Pope, Paul IV., raised it, in 1559, to the dignity of a cathedral. Part of the ruins of the abbey of St. Bavon may be still traced in the old Spanish citadel. The abbey was founded by that holy prelate about the year 608, amidst the remains of an ancient temple dedicated to Mercury.

The cathedral, in its pristine form, was of a limited size; it has been, from time to time, greatly extended. It suffered many injuries during the various sieges and contests of which Ghent and its environs have been the theatre. Portions of it have

been frequently rebuilt and newly ornamented ; so much so, that it may be said to present to the spectator a historical picture of ecclesiastical architecture, commencing with the ninth and terminating with the eighteenth century—since which time it has remained nearly in the state in which we now find it. There is a peculiar charm in the aspect of a temple in which one can thus contemplate the results of operations carried on through a succession of nearly a thousand years—in which, we might say, ten centuries are assembled in the presence of each other to bear witness to the love of the past generation for their holy religion—to the unaltered, unchangeable character of the Catholic faith—to the continued presence in its tabernacle of **HIM** who promised that He would be with his church throughout all ages !

The chapels which surround the choir are profusely ornamented with marbles of various tints, and different species of metals. They are decorated by a great number of pictures, many of which are executed in the most exquisite style by artists of European celebrity. Amongst them is one of Pourbus's best pictures, “ Christ convers-

ing with the Doctors." The artist, according to his usual manner, has introduced upon his canvass portraits of persons of distinction who lived in his own time. The most remarkable are those of Charles V., his son (Philip II.), and Pourbus himself. In the chapel of "The Lamb" is a masterpiece especially worthy of notice, not only on account of its being the production of the brothers Van Eyck, the inventors of the art of painting in oil, but also of the profound impression which it leaves upon the mind. The subject is taken from the Apocalypse. It represents the Heavenly Lamb receiving the adoration of all the saints of the Old and New Testament. On the right of the Lamb are ranged the patriarchs and prophets on their knees; on the left, the apostles and martyrs; in the distance are groups of saintly men, bishops, and virgins, holding in their hands branches of palm—that most venerable, most graceful of all trees—the beacon of the desert—the dweller by those fountains of sweet waters, near which encamped the children of Israel on their way out of the land of Egypt—the tree whose feathery branches, mingled with those of the olive, were strewed upon the

road by which the Messiah entered Jerusalem, when the descendants of that people hailed him as the Blessed ONE who came in the name of the Lord, as **Hosanna** in the highest—the emblem of his victory over the powers of darkness—one of the productions of nature annually gathered by his church, sprinkled by her consecrated waters, blessed by her solemn prayers, presented by her ministers to her people, who hold its branches in their hands during the reading of the Passion, as it is written by St. Matthew, afterwards publicly wear them as a symbol of their faith, and preserve them in their homes as a token of their reverence and affection for Him who laid down his life in atonement for the sins of mankind.

It is impossible for a Christian who truly loves his faith ever to behold the palm without the most lively emotions; but, in the picture under consideration, the introduction of this accessory produces a mysterious feeling, not unlike that which the *Apocalypse* itself excites in the mind. Indeed, the artists seem to have participated in the inspiration of the sacred writer while they were engaged in designing their noble work. It is connected, accord-

ing to the fashion of those times (fourteenth century), with three other paintings, the principal of which, the middle one, represents the Redeemer as seated upon a throne, and attired in the pontifical costume. On his right is the Blessed Virgin, beautiful as a Madonna of Raphael, and on his left is St. John the Baptist, presenting in his stern, masculine figure, a fine contrast to the effulgent, heavenly countenance of the “Mother of Divine Grace.” In the lower distance is seen, upon a luminous ground, a view of Jerusalem.

The English visitor will observe with particular interest four magnificent candelabra of burnished copper, ranged in front of the great altar, which originally were the property of our Charles I., and amongst the ornaments of Whitehall Chapel, that were sold by order of the Commonwealth. His arms are engraved on one side, on the other are those of the Bishop Triest, who presented them to the chapel.

The pulpit is a most elaborate piece of furniture, consisting partly of white marble figures and ornaments, partly of carved wood. The effect of this mixture is far from being accordant with good

taste. There are several excellent monuments in the choir. That of the bishop just mentioned is said to be the finest piece of sculpture in Belgium. The figure of the bishop, as large as life, is seen kneeling on his tomb, in episcopal attire, contemplating the cross borne by the Redeemer. On the opposite side is a statue of the Virgin. These three figures are executed in the most finished style. But the spectator turns from these magnificent productions of the chisel of the celebrated Duquesnoy with a lively interest to two beautiful small angels, supported on an hour-glass, placed at the foot of the monument. They are models of grace and loveliness.

A volume might be written upon the ornaments which fill this noble cathedral. It presents of itself a *coup d'œil* of the most imposing description. The nave and aisles are of surprising extent, affording ample space for the display of the processions, which add so much to the pomp and solemnity of the great festivals. Between those parts of the edifice and the choir are several lofty columns of variegated marbles. There are altogether four-and-twenty chapels in this cathedral, each having in

front of its altar a screen exquisitely wrought in carved oak or marble, or brass richly gilt, or iron fashioned in a style of singular beauty.

The crypt or subterranean church appears to be a work of Cyclopean hands. It is irregular in its design; but this very irregularity speaks of those primeval ages of the faith, when she had not yet ventured to point her steeples to the skies, and was obliged to carry on her functions in caverns concealed from the eye of her persecutors.

I subsequently visited the church of St. Michael with a painful interest. It was stripped of all its ornaments by the Vandals of the French republic, and then desecrated by being used as a “Temple of Reason.” Upon its altar was placed a statue of the “Goddess of Liberty,” at the feet of which were celebrated the marriages contracted, as the language of those lamentable days described them, “in conformity with the law.” Nevertheless it was a most gratifying spectacle to behold sacred rites again solemnized in this once-degraded edifice; it was a triumph to hear, as I heard at vespers, the “*Laudate Pueri*,” and the “*Magnificat*” finely chanted beneath that roof which had witnessed so

foul a profanation of the shrine of the archangel. "Who," we might justly exclaim, when we think of the rebellion against religion that marked those years of terror, "who, indeed," to use the seraph's own words, when he cast the accursed from the regions of happiness, "is like unto God?" It would seem as if he permitted the genius of evil to usurp even his own altars for a moment, in order to give testimony to the faithful of his power to conquer and chase away the demon, when it suits his ever wise purposes so to do.

St. Michael's church ranks next to the cathedral. Its ornaments are, for the reason I have stated, chiefly of the modern school of art. It possesses, however, a splendid crucifixion, by Vandyck, pronounced by Sir Joshua Reynolds to be "one of his noblest works." One cannot too much admire the figure of the horse which the artist has introduced into this fine painting. I afterwards found it repeated in his picture of Charles V., in the Sal di Baroccio, at Florence. To this church those visitors must repair who wish to hear the anthems of our church sung with a truly solemn effect. The organ is, I think, at once the most powerful and melo-

dious I ever heard. Some years ago the most celebrated members of the bar were accustomed to assemble in this edifice, for the purpose of affording not only legal advice to the poor, but also of defraying the expenses of any suits in which they might be engaged. The barristers who assembled upon those occasions were enrolled in a confraternity, called the “Brotherhood of St. Ivoy.” I could not learn why they had discontinued their meetings, the last of which was held so late as the year 1830. I fear that the charitable dispositions of my learned brethren are rather on the decline, not only in the Netherlands, but elsewhere. Or, perchance, the poor have become less litigious than they used to be—a circumstance by no means to be lamented.

Several travellers have erroneously stated that St. Bavon’s is the oldest church in Ghent. That honour belongs to the church of St. Nicholas, which is situated near the corn-market. It is constructed in the primitive Gothic style, of Tournay stone, to which time has imparted the colour of black marble. It was burnt down in the year 1120, during a great fire which occurred at that

time in Ghent ; but it was soon after restored, scarcely any deviation having been made from its original plan. In the fifteenth century the tower was added to it ; the architect, with a degree of taste not often visible in the buildings of that period, rendered his work so conformable in every respect with the original style of the church, that it would seem as if both had been of the same age. The portico is quite modern (1225). I cannot pay a similar compliment to the designer of this addition, for it is in the Ionic order, which spoils the harmony of the edifice.

St. Nicholas has had its vicissitudes during the civil wars to which religious disputes gave rise. At one time it was used as a stable, at another as a store for provisions. The pictures by which it was originally ornamented were all taken away or destroyed. Those which are now seen upon its walls are modern, and not particularly worthy of notice. An epitaph on a slab in this church records an extraordinary fact—that a citizen of Ghent, named Oliver Minjau, and his wife, Amelbergen Slaugen, had thirty-one children ! Twenty-one of these

were boys, and ten girls. When Charles V. made his grand entry into Ghent, in the year 1526, he observed amongst the crowd Minjau at the head of his twenty-one sons, all clothed in uniform. In recompence for such an addition to the number of his subjects the emperor assigned him a pension. Unhappily he did not long after survive to enjoy his good fortune. The singular plague called *the Sweat*, which at that period swept away such numbers in England, extended itself to Ghent. Minjau and his wife saw the whole of their children perish under the effect of this malady, one after another, and eventually fell victims to it themselves ! They were interred in the cemetery by which the church was formerly surrounded.

The new theatre is very conveniently placed near the “*Hôtel de la Poste*.” It may be justly classed among the handsomest buildings of its kind in Europe. There are appended to it concert rooms, which, together with the theatre, are most splendidly ornamented in the style belonging to the age of Louis XIV. This remarkably fine edifice gives one a strong impression of the taste prevailing among

the inhabitants of Ghent. Their love for music is proverbial; their musical professors have long and most deservedly enjoyed a very high reputation. The university, also of modern date, is a remarkably fine building, and well worthy of the attention of visitors.

CHAPTER X.

Red and White Roses. Way to the Races. Ladies of Ghent. Ghent Gentlemen. Race Booths. Scene on the Course. The Spectators. Groups on the Course. The lower Booths. Quitting the Field. The Return Home. Prosperity of Ghent. Its general Appearance. Cultivation of Flowers. People of Ghent. Ancient Ghent.

OFF to the races ! It was one of those fine days of June, which, after a few genial showers of rain, draw forth the full-blown red roses in all their pride and beauty, but still leave upon the branches numerous buds just beginning to shew their blushes, and looking like so many smiling daughters of as many joyous mothers. The white rose-trees seem to be great favourites in the suburban gardens and villas of Ghent. They were all out in their bridal attire. Along the margins of the corn-fields, rows of all sorts of flowers, of every hue, waved gaily in the summer breeze, and yielded to the air their choicest fragrance.

We had scarcely entered on the road leading to the race-field, when we found ourselves forming part of a procession of a long line of carriages and vehicles, several of which recalled the fashions that prevailed in England a century ago. By the way-side were pedestrians without number, many of them muscular, able-bodied young men, though generally under what we hold to be the military size. Arrived within a short distance of the scene of amusement, we were stopped at a barrier, beyond which we were informed that we could not advance in our carriage without paying five francs. We might descend and walk on gratis, if we liked, leaving our vehicle in waiting for us; but being somewhat experienced in the enjoyment of an elevated seat, whence we might command a view of the whole course, we drove on, submitting to the extortion, and found a favourable station near the tribune assigned to the judges of the contests about to take place.

The area prepared for the races was not a very spacious one. It was manifestly measured out with a niggard hand from amidst the exuberant corn-fields by which it was encircled. Benches, pro-

tected from the sun by temporary sheds, were raised to some extent, one above another, the lower being appropriated to the “nobles”—a public distinction more aristocratic than I had expected to find in Belgium. Seats were also set apart for “membres honoraires” and “membres effectifs.” The charge for a place on the benches, noble or not noble, was ten francs; but the cards for the former were not given without due discrimination. As soon as they were filled by the dames and demoiselles formed out of the “porcelain” earth of the Netherlands, I walked down the lines to see to what style of beauty they belonged. I am afraid of giving the result of my researches, remembering my indiscretions in Hungary, and the consequences thereof. I was guilty of having stated in my “Danube” pages that female education had not appeared, so far as I could observe or learn, to have made as yet much progress in that portion of the Austrian dominions; and for this statement I have been soundly scolded in every company from Presburg to the mountains of Transylvania—nay, and beyond them! Taught by experience, therefore, I am become sage, and so cautious in all such mat-

ters, that I will not even venture upon an innuendo.

The benches of every degree exhibited numerous specimens of high corporal condition amongst the male sex. In fact, I never saw in any country so many examples of that “manner of man” which on one occasion puzzled Washington Irving so excessively, and gave origin to one of the most amusing of his “crayon” sketches. I allude to his story of the “Fat Gentleman.” The “cut-a-way” coat was universal, and the difficulty of compelling the lower button to go into its proper receptacle seemed to have been generally no very easy matter. Cheerful, good-natured faces, however, were beaming everywhere with the joyous feelings which the genial weather and sports of the day so naturally excited. Not a little amusement arose from the whitened patches which defiled the gloss on the cut-a-ways of the “honoraires” and the “effectifs” after they were placed in contact with the backs of the benches. In order to save paint, these were all washed over with lime, with a view to impart to them a gay appearance. The consequence was, that all who came in contact with them presented,

when they afterwards condescended to walk about, much of the appearance of so many hodmen or dusty millers !

There were numerous booths on the field, of various shapes, signalized by flags and streamers of a hundred colours, which gave a highly picturesque aspect to the scene. During the intervals of the races, these places of entertainment were crowded by the *bourgeoisie* of Ghent, and the peasantry who flocked in from all the country round. The variety of their costumes, though many of them wore the blouse, presented an interesting spectacle. Beer was the general beverage, and the savoury odours that came from the fires within and without, gave token of ample provision having been made for the consumption of the day. The circuit of the course was kept free from intrusion by soldiers, who were stationed at equal intervals from each other. The contrast of their uniform with the varied dresses of the multitude, the glancing lights from their bayonets, when touched by the rays of the sun, gave the circle, thus so completely described, an aspect novel to my eye, and, I must add, peculiarly striking and brilliant.

When I took my seat on the roof of our carriage, and contemplated the whole of the picture before me — the masses of pedestrians already assembled in the field — the numerous groups still bending their way towards it, through the teeming and flowery corn-fields and meadows all around — the numbers of Belgian gentlemen galloping here and there over the green turf — the equipages, some of them splendid, others sufficiently elegant, several grotesque, from their obsolete fashion — the grand *white* stand, filled with “lords and ladies gay” — and the booths and tents, with their streamers and colours flying on high, illumined by the sun, and gently agitated by light and variable zephyrs, which prevented the summer heat from being oppressive — I felt that there are moments of happiness even in this life — the happiness of seeing so many of our species free from all care, and enjoying in common one of the most exciting and, at the same time, most innocent, of all recreations. A military band was in attendance, and added to the feelings of the hour that thrilling sense of pleasure which music, especially in the open, healthy air, never fails to awaken.

Compared with the running at Epsom, Ascot, or Doncaster, that of the course near Ghent was immeasurably inferior, as one might expect; nevertheless it was not without a strong degree of interest. Many more horses were entered than those which made their appearance. There were, however, two or three very good races. It is impossible to see even a pair of jockeys, ordinarily mounted, drawn up abreast, waiting for the signal, off at the same instant, watching each other in the early movements of the contest, restraining their own eagerness, pushing on gradually, coolly quickening their pace, still reserving their strength until the goal appears in sight, and then the rush onwards, the eagerness both of horse and rider, the lash of the whip, the fiery look of the antagonists at each other, the flight of the well-trained, graceful, rival steeds, panting quite as much as their masters for the victory, without forgetting for the moment that there is in the world any other spectacle worth attention.

Before quitting the course, I visited the lower classes of booths, which were undistinguished by any flags, and were of a much ruder construction

than those already described. Here were assembled the peasantry and the labouring orders from Ghent, wholly given up to the pleasures of the hour. The dancing-booths were crowded. Fiddlers and pipers, placed upon the tops of barrels, rasping and droning with all their might ; the stout, well-fed Flemish gallants, and their fair partners, scarcely less ponderous than themselves, decorated by enormous gold ear-rings, stamping on the floor with swaggering gaiety ; now crossing hands, and changing sides, and wheeling round in circles ; an occasional wink of the eye, sly coquettish glances, and shouts of universal merriment, placed before me, in life and action, one of those old Flemish pictures in which holiday rejoicings are so minutely, so exquisitely, represented. Nor were there wanted to fill up the scene the ballad-singers, with troops of chubby urchins around them ; the sleight-of-hand men, with their brass balls, their tumbling, face-painted clowns, their noisy drums, and still more noisy orations ; the gaming-tables for thimbleriggers ; monkeys riding on dogs ; dogs dancing quadrilles ; girls on stilts ; the merry-go-rounds ; the gingerbread lotteries ; the vendors of cheap

ribands, caps, and shawls, puffing off their wares in grandiloquent phraseology ; the tooth-drawers and dealers in elixirs, by the use of which one might live to the age of Noah ; fat cooks, weighing out their smoking pork and beef *à la mode*, and active, laughing, neatly-dressed female waiters, handing round their tall glasses of beer, or their smaller measures of genuine Schiedam.

The order with which the course was kept—the regularity with which the hours mentioned in the card for each start were observed—the quietness with which every necessary arrangement was carried on, reflected great credit upon “the membres effectifs,” whose excellent arrangements enabled the carriage folk and the equestrians to quit the field, after the races were over, with the most perfect order. There was none of that crowding and racing, upsetting and blocking up, lashing, and swearing, and by-battling, which render the hour of departure at Epsom so disagreeable and dangerous. Every thing went off with the greatest tranquillity and regularity ; nor did I hear of a single accident to mar the enjoyments of the day.

The return from the course was a highly inte-

resting scene. The procession of vehicles and horses extended more than a mile in length, moving at a slow pace, and attended on each side by a long line of pedestrians. The dwellers of numerous villas on the way, belonging to wealthy merchants and gentry, were seated in semicircles in front of their habitations, amidst gardens cultivated with remarkable taste, at tables ornamented with flowers (amongst which the dahlias were pre-eminently beautiful), taking their coffee and fruit in shady arbours, or the open air, and observing with joyous looks the spectacle exhibited to their view. Groups of laughing faces filled the windows of the houses nearer to the highway ; and in front of all the cabarets were assembled numerous guests, attired in holiday costume, fathers and mothers, with their juvenile tribes, and loving pairs, and single gentlemen of every degree. The waiters seemed, with all their running here and there, to have more upon their hand than they could go through. They were in agonizing requisition.

Certainly Ghent presented to me no signs of decay. The scenes just described speak of general prosperity and content. The city may be described

as composed of many islets (twenty-six, it is said) connected by nearly ninety bridges of wood or stone. It is seated on the Scheldt, the Lys, the Lieve, and the Moer, which communicate with each other by their own branches and the canals. One of these canals, a splendid work, forms a communication between Ghent and Bruges. The scenery upon its margin is not destitute of beauty. Upon its surface may be seen, strewed in elegant variety, the bog-bean and the water-lily, and dependent over these, from the steep banks, the tassels of the flowering rush. The numerous tall chimneys belonging to manufactories for spinning yarn, the fabrication of clothing of every description, of linens, and especially of damask, so called from the city of Damascus, whence the art of weaving it was originally brought by the Crusaders, mark Ghent at once as the Manchester of Belgium, while its towers and steeples rising still higher, and almost as numerous, proclaim it as the religious capital of the kingdom.

The principal promenade is much frequented in the afternoon by all the fashion of the town. It is shaded by a triple row of trees, and refreshed by

the waters of the Coupure, which connects the Lys with the canal of Bruges. Not far from the promenade is the Casino, an extensive and not inelegant building, in the Grecian style, surrounded by gardens filled with all kinds of flowers, and laid out with great taste. The Casino serves for the concerts of several musical societies, and the exhibitions of flowers in summer and autumn given by the botanical association of Ghent. Behind the building is an amphitheatre open to the sky, which reminded me of that of Argos, from its having been excavated out of a steep bank. It is planted with flowers, intermingled with a variety of mosses, and presents in the fine season a charming appearance, which must be rendered still more enchanting on those occasions when the brotherhood of St. Cecelia summon all the musical population of Ghent—a numerous race—to hear their admirable performances. The amphitheatre affords accommodation to six thousand persons, and is said to have been often entirely filled.

I need hardly remark that the neighbourhood of Ghent has been long celebrated for its cultivation of dahlias, orange trees, camellias, azaleas, and

other valuable and splendid exotic plants, which it exports to all parts of Europe, constituting in fact a regular trade, that produces in some years a return of nearly two millions of francs. The city wears a much more modern and cheerful aspect than Bruges. Many of the houses are spacious and palace-like, quite in the Italian style; the effect of their fine fronts, however, decorated though they be by bas-reliefs and frescoes, is much impaired by the inferior quality of the window-glass, which has a muddy greenish colour. It is manufactured chiefly at Charleroi. The roguish *espion* of which I made mention in my notes on Bruges, is also much in use here. There are several extensive squares in Ghent, well planted with trees. Considerable bustle prevails in the streets during the hours of business. The people moving through them seem by no means addicted to that splenetic mien which characterizes John Bull, as he hastens through Cheapside. On the contrary, they usually appear frank, communicative, and lively, as if they had been just enjoying good early dinners, and foresaw no great difficulty in the management of their affairs. The shops are well stored with every

species of attractive wares. They abound especially in jewellery, gold and silver ornaments, and watches, wrought in the most elegant style. Some of these are so small, that they would easily fit within a lady's ring.

Near the old quays of the canals, however, and the earlier haunts of commerce, may still be seen narrow lanes and streets, in which the middle-age style of houses, with their fantastic gables and chimneys, and their sharp-tilted roofs, still predominate. In these quarters, also, one encounters several antique lofty towers and belfries. Amongst the most curious of the old-fashioned forms of building in Ghent is the "Hall of the Watermen" on the Quai aux Herbes. Its numerous Saxon arches and carvings in stone are well worth examination. The owners of it were in former days a most turbulent band, as we may learn from the pages of Froissart. The long old-fashioned waggons, made for their coeval streets and lanes, present a striking contrast with the gay, light carriages which may be frequently observed in the modern quarters of Ghent.

CHAPTER XI.

The Wonder of Ghent. The Beguinage. Menage of a Beguine. Her Fancy-work. Her Duties. Beguine Dress. Evening Service. The Benediction. Solemn Scene. Antiquity of Begunes. My Uncle Toby. Carmelite Chapel. Elaborate Carvings. A Cowled Monk.

THERE is hardly a spot within the precincts of this interesting city which has not a place in the story of the numberless civil commotions or wars with external foes, in which Ghent has been engaged from time to time. In the street near the Marché de Vendredi, called the Mannekins Aert, is a huge cannon called “Mad Margaret,” after a countess of Flanders, celebrated for the terrible violence of her temper. It is also commonly designated the “Wonder of Ghent;” it is constructed of malleable iron, and was used by Philip Van Artevelde, at the siege of Oudenarde, in 1382. Froissart, speaking of this monstrous weapon of war, declares in his

own racy, though quaint language, that, when it was used in the siege of the place just mentioned, the report of its discharges was heard at a distance of five leagues by day and of ten by night ! It sounded, he adds, “as if all the devils of hell were out !” Ghent may be said to be a seaport, as the Sas de Gand canal connects it with the mouth of the Scheldt at Terneuse. I observed several merchant-vessels in its splendid basin, and I was informed that its maritime trade was annually increasing. The latest returns shew that the internal commerce of Belgium has been trebled since the establishment of the railways. Many new buildings are in progress of erection at Ghent, amongst which the Palais de Justice stands conspicuous.

There is scarcely any religious establishment upon the continent which a traveller, no matter what his faith may be, visits with greater interest and satisfaction than that which here goes under the name of the “ Beguinage.” There are two communities of this order in Ghent, one belonging to the greater Beguinage, the other to the smaller. I took an early opportunity of driving to the former. Upon entering within its gate, I found that

it was a village in itself, enclosed within a fosse and a wall, a square in the middle, in which was a Spanish-looking church, neat small houses all round, accessible by short passages in front, through doors with small grills in them, through which questions were asked before admission was given to a stranger. Plates are on or over these doors, upon which are inscribed the names of saints or of sisters of the order.

Approaching one of the houses nearest to the gate, I pulled the bell-ring; a sister immediately appeared at the grill, and asked if I wished to see any particular person in the house. I answered that I merely wished to see the house itself, upon which I was shewn into a large apartment, where several females, not dressed in the habit of the order, were engaged in knitting and sewing. Three or four of the community were also present similarly occupied. The nun who acted as my guide, then approaching a cupboard, informed me that it contained the whole of her part of the establishment. It was fitted up with shelves, upon which were a few plates, a cup, saucer, teapot, and coffee-pot, part of a loaf of bread, a portion of butter, a knife

and fork, and a napkin. "Here is my table," said she, drawing out a square board from beneath the lower shelf of the cupboard,—"we do not dine or take any of our meals in common, because we are usually out the greater part of the day, and our return is uncertain. When our engagements abroad are discharged, then we come home and prepare our own breakfasts and dinners. We have each of us a cupboard like this, with its small table, at which each of the sisters sits alone. Here," she added, opening the lower doors of the cupboard under her table, "are some specimens of my work—perhaps you would like to look at them?" She then produced several specimens of fancy-work, very neatly executed. Among these were purses fashioned in the old style, consisting of cards cut three-corner-wise, covered with silk of different colours, a gold tassel at the bottom, edged with gold cord, and at top capable of being opened or closed by gold cords, which were arranged for the purpose. Nice pincushions, kettle-holders, and all that knick-knackery of small affairs, the names of which my "gentle readers" know a great deal better than I do, abounded in the nun's little closet.

I purchased a few specimens of her industry, as memorials of my visit to this interesting establishment. She then shewed me over her cell, and an apartment attached to it, in which, she said, she had the privilege of lodging, for such length of time as she pleased, any female relative who came to see her. Both her cell and its adjoining chamber were furnished in a plain, comfortable style, and were kept delicately clean. This description of my kind guide's abode may serve for that of every other sister of the community. In each house there are two or three cells, with adjoining apartments for hospitality. The members of the Beguinage are not bound by their vows to remain in the community an hour longer than they think fit. While they do remain, they are pledged to celibacy. They employ the whole of their time in the duties of religion, in attending on the sick, assisting the clergy in preparing for death those who may be in need of their most consoling services, in administering charity secretly amongst those families whom they may discover to be in want, preparing articles of dress for the poor, and, in short, in every kind of good work that is acceptable to the

DIVINE MASTER whom they serve. Though free to quit the community whenever they please, I was informed that very few instances had occurred of a sister divesting herself of her veil, and that those instances were chiefly attributable to maladies which required change of climate.

Although separated during the course of the day, after the morning service the whole of the community assemble at seven o'clock, p.m., in the church, to attend the benediction. I returned to the Beguinage a little before that hour, and observed with great interest the constant streaming in through the gate of these admirable women, hastening to their devotions from all quarters of the city, in which they had been during the day exercising the saintly functions of their order. Their head-dress is peculiar, and highly picturesque. Over a black silk hood they carry a veil, called a beguine, folded flat in form of a square, and laid upon the top of the hood. It is formed of a snowy white lawn: when they enter the church, they stop for a moment to remove the beguine from their heads, open it out, and then arrange it gracefully over the silk hood, so as

partly to conceal the face. They then proceed to their places among the benches and genuflectories ranged on both sides of the nave, and occupy themselves for awhile in meditation and prayer.

When I beheld the whole of the sisterhood, consisting of nearly seven hundred individuals, thus congregated, kneeling before the altar, which was lighted up for the solemn function of the evening with numerous tapers ornamented with flowers, and arrayed in pure white draperies, richly fringed with gold; not a breath audible throughout the whole assembly, all with one soul waiting for the blessing they were about to receive as the crowning reward for the labours of the day, I suddenly felt as if I had been for a moment admitted to behold the choir of heaven prostrate before the throne of God.

A peal from the organ announced the approach from the vestry of a procession of boys clothed in red cassocks and muslin surplices, bearing lights and incense, and followed by the officiating priest, clothed in a rich cope. Arrived at the steps of the altar, he ascended to the tabernacle, and having taken from its depository the sacred host, arranged

it in the remonstrance, which he placed before the tabernacle ; he then knelt down, and bowing his venerable head, remained for awhile in the attitude of adoration, the fragrant fumes of the incense rising like a cloud around him. The seven hundred white-veiled sisters were all seen in a similar attitude of homage for a few moments, when the organ again preluding, they intoned in perfect harmony the “O Salutaris Hostia.” The effect of so many female voices, thrilling with the fervour of enthusiastic devotion, accompanied by the sounds of the organ, now swelling through the lower clarions of the instrument, now running in joyous modulations through the notes of the higher octaves, was well calculated to excite the feelings of such an assembly as this to a seraphic rapture.

When they concluded the beautiful hymn, so full of the aspirations of a soul knowing of no aid against the violence of warring passions except that which it may receive from the “saving host,” the host that “opens the gate of heaven,” and points to the abodes of eternal life, and light, and peace ; the priest having offered his tribute of incense to the eucharist, received from one of the attendants a

silk scarf, decorated in the middle with the figure of the Lamb embracing the crucifix, worked in gold, and surrounded by a glory, arranged it on his shoulders over his cope, and again ascended the altar ; then covering his hands with the scarf, he took between them the remonstrance, and gave the benediction in the usual form. All was again breathless silence—profound adoration. The scene has nothing like it upon earth ; so many virgins veiled in white, prostrate in the Divine presence, and wrapped, for the moment, in one common aspiration of prayer and praise to the Great Jehovah; it was a spectacle which filled me at once with the most sublime emotion and awful dread lest I should never find myself repeating that homage before the indivisible Trinity in the regions of the blessed !

After repeating the Rosary and the Litany of the Holy Name, the greater majority of the sisters rose, and having re-arranged their beguines upon their heads, took their departure. The rest remained to pursue their meditations.

The establishment of the Beguinage in Ghent is the principal one of their order, which consists, altogether, of between six and seven thousand members.

spread throughout Belgium. It has been in existence upwards of twelve hundred years, without interruption, having been, on account of its truly benevolent and useful objects, respected equally by Joseph II. of Austria, when he suppressed almost every other convent in the Low Countries, and by the French Directory, when Belgium became part of the French republic. The late King of Holland, bigoted though he was against their religion, gave them a charter in 1827, confirming them in the possession of their property and their privileges. It is well known that they have amongst them several members of ancient families.

Few Catholics, I apprehend, will agree in the wish expressed by Sterne concerning the motives by which the Beguines are actuated in the execution of their pious and charitable functions. "She was in black," said Trim, "down to her toes, with her hair concealed under a cambric border, laid close to her forehead. She was one of those kind of nuns, and please your honour, of which there are a good many in Flanders." "By thy description, Trim," said my uncle Toby, "I dare say she was a young Beguine, of whom there are none to be

found anywhere except in the Spanish Netherlands ; they differ from other nuns in this—that they can quit their cloisters if they choose to marry ; they visit the sick by profession, but I had rather, for my own part, they did it out of good-nature." Sterne ought to have known better. Good-nature falls very short of religious charity, and would be, as compared with the latter, but a very frail support during the performance of the duties which the Beguine has to undergo.

Loitering homewards, still reflecting upon the solemn scene I had just witnessed, I found open an old iron gate leading to a building which, from its neglected appearance in front, I supposed to have been one of the old churches desecrated by the vandal soldiers of the French republic. Seeing two or three women, however, pass through the gate, I followed their footsteps, and was surprised, on entering the edifice, to find myself within one of the most interesting and neatly-kept churches in Ghent. It belongs to the order of the *Carmes déchaussés*, with whose convent it communicates, and stands in the middle of the Rue du Bourg. One of the monks, who was engaged in preparing the

altar for the services of the ensuing morning, and whose fine head, shaven all round the crown, leaving a circle of raven black hair beneath it, was well displayed, his cowl being thrown backwards, immediately desisted from his work, and kindly offered to shew me over the “oratory,” as he called it. It is particularly distinguished for its extremely elaborate carvings, all exquisitely finished, and preserved with so much care that they seem as if they had been recently executed, although at least three centuries old. The sides of the oratory, which consists simply of a nave and sanctuary, are panelled all round to the height of nearly twenty feet ; the panelling is divided into compartments, in each of which there is a medallion head, carved out of the solid wood, and wrought with remarkable elegance. The head stands out in relief, the leaf of the panel having been planed down after the block for the medallion was outlined. The balustrade of the sanctuary, the pulpit, and the doors of the confessionals are also carved in the most admirable style. But the masterpiece of all these wonderful works is the great door of the church, which presents a unique specimen of this

species of decoration. I was astonished to hear from my intelligent guide, that all these productions of an art now so little cultivated are the result of the industry and skill of one individual,—a monk of the order to which he belonged. He mentioned the circumstance with a manifest feeling of pride, which may well be excused. The whole of these performances occupied the author of them thirty years. His must, indeed, have been a labour of love.

While I was examining these curious legacies of a pious age, an elderly monk came out from the vestry in surplice and stole. Putting his cowl upon his head, he entered one of the confessionals, where three or four female penitents were waiting to be heard. I glanced over the paintings in this chapel; but they are, for the most part, of an indifferent character.

CHAPTER XII.

Journey to Malines. Cardinal of Malines. Cathedral. Splendid Monument. Vandyk. Rubens. Rubens's Charges. Pork Pie. O'Connell. Brussels. Dr. Lever. The Park. The Library. St. Gudule. Dullness of Brussels.

FROM Ghent we proceeded to Malines, the central spot where all the railways of Belgium meet. We arrived at a quarter before eleven, A.M. Bustle—bustle—bustle in every direction—trains every moment arriving and departing—portmanteaus—bonnet-boxes—hat-cases—dressing-cases—and all sorts of carpet-bags, pulled about by porters here and there, followed by ladies and gentlemen, in feverish watchfulness, to see if they had all their baggage—policemen endeavouring, often in vain, to appease the anxieties of crowds of passengers, some of whom wanted to go to Antwerp, some to Louvain, some to Termonde, some to Brussels, some to Liege, all in an instant, everybody fearing, so

many were the lines of road radiating from this centre, that he might enter a wrong carriage, and instead of getting forward to his destination, return to the place whence he had set out. Very much to the credit of the establishment, however, be it said, that eventually order prevailed. A vast space is given to this general meeting-ground of all the railways, which renders it, with its numerous engines hastening to their proper stations, and its many handsome buildings, one of the most interesting spectacles in Europe.

We reached the cathedral in time to hear part of a high mass, at which the Cardinal Archbishop and Primate of Belgium was present. When the divine service was over, he proceeded to a genuflection in the middle of the sanctuary, where one of the attendants held before him a large silver crucifix. Having remained on his knees—almost prostrate—for some time, engaged in profound devotion, he arose, and proceeded down the nave, administering his blessings as he went to the crowds by which the cathedral was filled. Wherever he observed children near him on the floor, or in their mothers' arms, he laid his right hand on their heads with an

emotion truly paternal. It is understood in the political circles that the primate exercises a powerful influence upon the management of political affairs in Belgium. The Catholic party, of course, look up to his eminence as their principal support, and they were, no doubt, the party who brought about one of the most justifiable revolutions which has ever taken place in any country.

The first object which strikes the eye of a stranger, immediately after entering this noble cathedral, is a new monument in white marble, erected in honour of the late archbishop. It is an admirable piece of workmanship, presenting in its general design and details a degree of good taste, simplicity, and effect not often to be seen in productions of this description. The epitaph tells us that the departed had discharged his arduous functions in the most exemplary manner, under circumstances of no ordinary difficulty, created by the terrors that everywhere attended the march of the barbarians in the service of the French Directory. He was the consoler of the afflicted, the friend of the poor, the much-beloved pastor of his flock. He is represented kneeling and clothed in his pontifical apparel.

An angel, holding a flaming torch in his hand, seems to announce to him that he is to appear immediately before the throne of God, and pointing the torch towards heaven, invites the prelate to follow him. The conception is grand, and the execution of it does not impair the strong impression which the scene produces in the first instance upon the eye of a stranger. It is a model of excellence, and must add greatly to the already distinguished reputation of the sculptor, M. Jehotte, of Liege.

The cathedral abounds in admirable paintings, the principal of which is Christ crucified between the two thieves, by Vandyk. Sir Joshua Reynolds's criticism upon this picture must supersede all other panegyrics. He pronounces it to be “the most capital of all Vandyk's works, in respect to the variety and extensiveness of the design and the judicious disposition of the whole. In the efforts which the thieves make to disengage themselves from the cross, he has successfully encountered the difficulties of the art, and the expression of grief and resignation in the Virgin is admirable. This picture, upon the whole, may be considered as one of the first pictures in the world, and gives the highest

idea of Vandyk's powers ; it shews that he had truly a genius for historical painting, if it had not been taken off by portraits. The colouring of this picture is certainly not of the brightest kind, but it seems as well to correspond with the subject as if it had the freshness of Rubens."

Besides the cathedral, there are several churches in Malines well worthy of examination, two of which bear the title of "Notre Dame." One of these is so called from a tradition which relates that a boat, having on board a silver statue of the Holy Virgin, which was saved from a church destroyed by fire, stopped of itself, on its way up the Dyle river, and that the church now called Notre Dame d'Hanswyk was founded near the spot where the boat rested. In the other church bearing the same name is to be seen the celebrated picture of "the Miraculous Draught of Fishes," by Rubens. It is universally admitted to be one of his most masterly productions. His "Adoration of the Magi," a magnificent composition, is placed in the church of St. John. Indeed, there is hardly an ecclesiastical edifice in Malines which is not filled with the

works of this great painter. But when his friends complimented him upon his great success in his art, he used to say to them,—“ If you wish to see the best of my works, you must go to the church of St. John, in Malines.” His ordinary charge for the employment of his time was a hundred florins of Brabant a day, and the attendant who shews the stranger over the church just mentioned seldom fails to invite him into the sacristy, where he places before him the receipt written and signed by Rubens for eighteen hundred crowns, being the price of eighteen pictures which he painted in as many days for that edifice.

Malines, formerly more commonly called Mechlin, was once celebrated for its manufacture of lace. Its reputation for the finest species of that beautiful fabric has passed altogether to Brussels. It is a picturesque town, but wears a desolate air, especially to a traveller who visits it immediately after quitting Ghent, with whose gay and joyous aspect it forms a disadvantageous contrast. We were much pleased, however, with its botanical garden, which is extensive and kept in the neatest order. We dined at the *table d'hôte* of the hotel called “ the

Crane." Malines being famous for the delicacy of a dish composed chiefly of pigs' feet and ears, we expected a specimen of this luxury on the table; but it was not to be had. In lieu of it, however, there was a pork-pie, which the guests, composed chiefly of the officers of the Lancers, unanimously pronounced to be delicious.

A little incident occurred on this occasion which I cannot help relating. It appeared that the surgeon attached to the regiment of the Lancers, who dined with us, had been some years ago in Ireland, where he happened frequently to hear Mr. O'Connell at public meetings. The moment we sat down to the table, I observed the doctor looking at me with a strong emotion, which I could not comprehend. He whispered to one of the officers near him, and the communication went rapidly round. All eyes were at once turned upon me, with smiles of the utmost good-nature, which not a little increased my astonishment. At length I was asked whether I was not the "Great Agitator" himself? Mr. Bellew and I laughed aloud at this droll mistake. He assured the company that I was not even related in any shape or way to that

celebrated personage. The doctor, however, who seemed to pride himself upon his skill in physiognomy, remained for awhile incredulous. "Well," said he, at last, "if you be not O'Connell, I can only affirm that I have never seen two faces more alike in my life, especially from the lip, upwards," drawing at the same time a line across his upper lip, to add force to his assertion. There was a general laugh at his expense, in which he soon joined with perfect good-humour.

We had at dessert some of the gingerbread for which the Malines confectioners are said to be unrivalled. When we arose from the table, the officers very civilly pressed us to take coffee with them at their *société*, which they said was just at hand. But we were obliged to decline their friendly invitation, as the train was to start in a few minutes for Brussels, where we found ourselves half an hour after we bade them good bye. Assuredly the fable of *Fortunatus* and his seven-leagued boots is nothing to the realities of the railway.

Our first view of Brussels, as we approached it, was not advantageous, owing to the evening being cloudy, with showers of rain. The lofty tower of

the cathedral looked, even through the mist, graceful and imposing, although, being then under process of repair, it was surrounded to the very top with scaffolding. We took up our quarters at the Hôtel Royal, where we experienced every possible degree of attention. Anxious as we were, the day after our arrival, to explore all the “lions” of the “Belgian Paris,” we were detained within doors the greater part of the day by a prolonged and violent thunderstorm and an incessant fall of rain, accompanied by that most uncomfortable of all atmospheric influences, a mist of the true Scottish order. As soon as the weather permitted, we sallied out to the news-room, where we had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of Dr. Lever, the author of one of the pleasantest books in the world—“Charles O’Malley.” We had to thank him and his amiable lady for many acts of kindness during our *séjour* at Brussels.

With the exception of some parts of the old city, where one still encounters public and private edifices in the favourite style of Brabant, there is not much to be seen in Brussels which is in keeping, as the painters say, with such towns as Ghent and

Bruges. The new quarters of the capital are indeed admirably laid out—the streets, and squares, and boulevards are spacious, and iron gilt railings, and long lines of lofty mansions, and shady trees put one constantly in mind of the gay metropolis of France, though they want the busy and lounging multitudes by which the places of great resort in Paris are filled, as if they were the scenes of a perpetual carnival. The splendid districts of Brussels present for the most part a lonely though stately appearance, and in this respect brought strongly to my mind the ordinarily deserted appearance of the principal street of Madrid, the Calle de Alcala.

The palace of the King is not worth visiting; that of the Prince of Orange is remarkable for the splendid style of its furniture and decorations, including a vast number of paintings of great value. The King, with a delicacy that confers great credit upon him, has refused to appropriate this sumptuous edifice to his own use. The park forms one of the handsomest public promenades I ever saw. It was the scene of the most sanguinary contest between the Dutch and the Belgians during the late revolution. Several of the trees still retain the

traces of that conflict. The museums of paintings and natural history, as well as "the library," deserve to be very fully examined. In the latter there is a great number of very curious missals, several of which are embellished with miniature paintings of matchless beauty, by Van Eyck and his pupils. Here, also, may be seen the celebrated "Chronicle of Hainault," in seven folio volumes, illuminated by the masterly hand of Hemling.

The noble tower of the Hôtel de Ville attracts the attention of the stranger at once to that remarkable building, which has been justly styled a municipal palace. In its grand hall took place the abdication of Charles V. Its tower is the most imposing structure of the kind to be found in Belgium. On the top is a figure, in copper, of St. Michael, which turns as easily as a small vane with the wind, though seventeen feet high. From the top of the tower the "storied" field of Waterloo may be distinctly seen, weather permitting.

The only church in Brussels deserving of particular notice is the cathedral of St. Gudule. The painted glass in its windows is said to exhibit one of the finest specimens of that art which are to

be found in the world. The nave presents a most imposing appearance, on account of the statues of the twelve apostles which are ranged against its pillars. In one of the side-chapels are still preserved the “consecrated particles,” which are said to have been stolen from the tabernacle in the fourteenth century by a sacrilegious Jew, and subjected by him and his brethren in the synagogue to the most blasphemous insults. I need say nothing in commendation of the principal manufactory of Brussels —its unrivalled lace. All my “gentle readers” are, doubtless, aware that every pattern, however minute and fine, is first wrought separately by the hand, and then sewed on a groundwork prepared for it.

The “curiosity-shops” in Brussels are abundant and extremely tempting. I much regretted, however, to see in some of them exposed for sale specimens of ingenuity very far from being fit for public exhibition. I had occasion to call upon some esteemed friends of mine on the Boulevards de l’Observatoire, which appeared to me a remarkably cheerful situation for a residence; they informed me that although Brussels was by no means so

much frequented lately by the English as it used to be, nevertheless houses were not to be had upon any thing like economical terms. I cannot think Brussels a very attractive place for a prolonged sojourn. It is, after all, but an imperfect imitation of Paris, and the measures taken to accomplish this object have deprived it, in a great measure, of that peculiarity and antiquity of character which renders most of the other towns of the Netherlands so very attractive. We had letters from Lord Palmerston and a much-valued friend of ours, Mr. St. George, to the minister, Sir G. Seymour. His excellency was not in town for some days after our arrival. As soon as he returned, he most kindly invited us to his hotel, and placed his opera-box at our disposal. We had only time to avail ourselves of his friendly attentions in the latter respect, as our arrangements were already made for a trip to Waterloo. The orchestral and vocal establishments at the opera were of a very indifferent order.

CHAPTER XIII.

Waterloo. Sergeant-Major Cotton. British Bivouac. Inclement Weather. Chateau of Hougoumont. Field of Battle. Forest of Soignies. Chapel of Hougoumont. Its Crucifix. Statue of the Virgin. Terrible Slaughter. M. Robiano. Position of the Guards. The Pyramid. The Weather. Antwerp. The Cathedral. The Golden Fleece. Vespers. Painted Windows. Dixit Dominus. The Confitebor. The Beatus Vir. The Laudate. The Mass. The Song of Evening. The Magnificat. Recal of the Jews. The Procession.

DURING the whole time of our stay at Brussels the weather was gloomy and oppressive, accompanied by frequent squalls and showers of rain. The morning we set out for Waterloo the rain was incessant the whole way. We stopped at the Couronne, and thought that we should have been obliged to return to Brussels without accomplishing our object, as we could not stir ten paces beyond our hotel without being drenched to the skin. However, an hour or two after mid-day the weather

cleared up a little, and we proceeded towards the memorable scene of battle, under the guidance of Sergeant-Major Cotton, who had served in the 7th Hussars, and was himself engaged in the great “battle of the nations,” as somebody has most appropriately designated that tremendous combat.

The sergeant we soon found to be a “character.” He displays his medal on his breast with a very becoming pride; he is of a good figure; has much of a veteran military air, and yet seems as active and as full of spirits as if he had not counted half the number of winters which have passed over his head. A few years ago he married a young English woman, and built himself a house in the village of Waterloo, from the gratuities presented to him by visitors. We found two or three fat little urchins running about his kitchen and a fine infant in a cradle. He is a native of the Isle of Wight, and his commanding officer during the battle was Sir Edward Kerrison.

The sergeant commenced operations by pointing out to us the small inn at which the Duke of Wellington established his head-quarters on the evening preceding the day that was to fix the destinies

of Europe. Proceeding onwards about a mile, he pointed out the summit of a gentle declivity, on which the British army bivouacked during the night, under heavy falls of rain, accompanied by violent peals of thunder and continued flashes of lightning. The whole country was covered with standing corn. It was in vain to attempt cooking any thing for supper, as there was no possibility of lighting fires. "Indeed, in some places," said the sergeant, "we were up to our knees in water, and we had nothing to eat except a little dry biscuit." The rain descended still as the morning breke, and did not clear off until about nine o'clock, when the English and French troops appeared in presence of each other. "We were many of us," said our guide, "trying to kindle fires, to boil a little coffee, but before we could succeed, word went round to stand to our arms, as the *French were coming*." These words make one even now startle, coming from one of the actors in that scene of slaughter.

It is unnecessary for me to pursue the narrative of the battle which ensued, already told and sung by historians, and travellers, and poets, and poetasters of every degree. The famous chateau of

Hougoumont, the little farm-house of La Haye Sainte, at both of which points the contest raged with the most terrible fury, still exist ; we inspected both with a thrilling interest. The sergeant pointed out at the distance of little more than a mile the village of Genappe, near which the French lines were drawn up, and also the eminence where Napoleon took his station at the commencement of the action. The whole area filled during the day by the contending hosts may be described as a large tract of undulating ground, well calculated for the operations of every description of force. In the rear of the British lines, however, was the forest of Soignies, which, from its being almost entirely without brushwood, offered a safe place of retreat for infantry, if retreat should have become necessary. The position of the enemy possessed no similar advantage in the rear—nothing, in fact, but highroads and open places, where a pursuing cavalry might, as it afterwards did, cut down the fugitives with terrible carnage.

We visited the garden where the Marquis of Anglesey's leg is interred beneath a monument. Our attention was particularly attracted by the

chapel which still remains in the farm-yard of Hougoumont. It was set on fire at an early period of the battle, and the still blackened walls attest that the flames reached every part of the chapel, until they approached the feet of a wooden figure of our Saviour, when they instantly ceased. The conflagration in a similar manner spared a fallen statue of the Blessed Virgin and child. These are facts that cannot be doubted, for all the figures still remain in the chapel, unscathed by fire, untouched by ball or sabre, just as they were before the battle commenced, although, as everybody knows, it was in this farm-yard, in the chateau of the proprietor hard by, and in this chapel itself, that the fate of the day may be said to have been decided. At one period twelve thousand men, accompanied by numerous pieces of artillery, were brought against this post—a post of the last importance to the allied troops then in possession of it. The first attack was bravely repelled; another assault followed, and was made by the French with such impetuosity that the orchard outside the chapel was for a moment abandoned. The firing then on both sides became awful; in a few minutes

fifteen hundred men were slain on the spot. It was then that the chateau and chapel were set on fire : both parties were enveloped in the flames. The wounded and the dying were heaped upon one another ; their shrieks were heard even amidst the roar of the artillery : many of them were burnt to death. The chateau was reduced to a mere shell ; and yet those flames, dealing such awful destruction around them, lost all their fury the moment they approached the precious emblems of the Catholic faith. They recoiled from the spot where sacred figures still may be seen, testifying an occurrence which admits of no denial ! Enormous sums have been offered for these figures to the proprietor, the Count Robiano, with whom I have the honour to be acquainted. All these offers he has declined.

The sergeant also pointed out to us the place where, behind a very slight rise, the Guards laid down concealed until the French made their last advance, when, at the laconic summons of the duke, the former arose as one man and decided the fortune of the field. I was satisfied with beholding from a distance the vast pyramid of earth intended

to be a perpetual monument of the victory. It is raised on the spot on which the brave Prince of Orange was wounded; it is nearly 200 feet in height, and is surmounted by a gigantic lion. The field was so much saturated with the rains which had fallen, that those of our party who went in sank to the ankle at every step. The sun, which had been for a short time out, again retired behind the clouds, the rain returned, and I was glad to get back to the village of Waterloo and re-enter our carriage. The roads were so deep that it was late before we arrived at our hotel.

The following morning, after hearing High Mass, we proceeded to Antwerp, where we arrived just in time for vespers, which we found going on in the cathedral of Notre Dame, admitted upon all hands to be one of the most splendid specimens of Gothic architecture in the Netherlands. On each side of the nave there are *three* aisles. It was commenced in the thirteenth century, and took nearly ninety years for its completion. The whole building, with the exception of the tower and choir, was, by one of those accidents to which most of the great churches have been strangely subject,

both at home and abroad, burnt down in 1533. But by the munificence of the then princely merchants of Antwerp, it was restored in the following year. A chapter of the celebrated order of the Golden Fleece was held in the choir twenty-one years after that period by Philip II. of Spain, at which nine kings assisted as Knights of the Order.

It was truly elevating to the soul to hear the vesper psalms, anthems, and hymns, sung in this majestic temple, the bishop, and a great number of his clergy, including the canons of the cathedral, being all assembled in the most sumptuous attire, the fine organ yielding its ever-enchanting music, the junior chaunters raising to the vaulted roof their cherub notes, which sounded in such brilliant contrast to the tenor and bass voices of the graver portion of the choir. The altar was lighted up by numerous wax-lights, but they burned dimly in the rays of the summer sun, which streamed in varied magic colours through the great western window. The rich paintings on the glass of that masterly piece of workmanship were all displayed in gorgeous style, and as the penetrating beams

passed over the heads of the people assembled in the church, here a deep purple, in another quarter vermillion, in another a beautiful azure, now lighting up the side of a column in dazzling brightness, now bringing into relief the darker parts of some majestic picture, now touching a monument or a statue with a blaze of gold, no true Christian could contemplate such a scene without exclaiming nearly in the words of the Psalmist : “ Lord, I *do* love the beauty of thy house, and the place where thy glory dwelleth.”

What a meet and fitting temple was this wherein to hear those prophecies triumphantly proclaimed which are now realities—the prophecies now performed, that the enemies of the Messiah should eventually be the “ footstool of his feet”—that he should hold in his hand the “ sceptre of Zion,” “ rule in the midst of his enemies,” surrounded by the “ brightness of the saints,” and of that eternity wherein he was begotten before the “ day star” first arose ; truly a “ Priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech ;” who hath seen “ kings broken,” nations fallen into “ ruin,” and yet, with

undiminished might, hath stooped to “drink of the torrent in the way,” and then, “lifting up his head,” hath proceeded in his glorious course.

Peal on, thou “Tuba mirum spargens sonum,” —sing aloud, ye alternate choirs, “Praise the Lord with all your hearts,” exhibit to our view the “congregation of the just in council,” say how the “wonderful works of God” are in all things in exquisite harmony with his designs, deserving of all “admiration,” and abounding in “magnificence!” Again and again proclaim His “covenants” as “shewn forth to all His people.” Bid the Gentiles cherish the beauty of the “inheritance” which they now enjoy, and syllable forth in your most solemn accents that “Holy and terrible Name, the fear of which is the beginning of wisdom.”

Oh! truly “blessed is the man who fears the Lord,” for he shall “delight in His commandments,” and pursue the paths of true “glory.” To him shall be given “mercy,” “compassion,” “judgment,” indifference to “evil hearing,” “hope,” “charity,” and “justice.” Against him the “desires of the wicked shall not prevail.”

Where is the soul, possessing within it a single spark of religious fire, that has ever heard without emotion the “*Laudate pueri dominum?*”—or that shout of the angelic choir,—“From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same, the name of the Lord is worthy of praise,”—of that Lord, who though “above all nations,” whose “glory is even above the heavens,” still condescends to look down upon the “poorest of His creatures upon earth,” lifts them by His spiritual gifts to a level with “the princes of His people,” and “maketh the barren woman to dwell in her house, the joyful mother of children?”

Such are amongst the ennobling thoughts and aspirations with which the Vesper service of the Catholic church renders her children familiar. The liturgy of the morning sacrifice is indeed of a more grave and majestic character, and performed with a more solemn pomp, on account of the wonderful mysteries which constitute and consecrate its whole character. But there is something peculiarly consoling in the evening office of the church. It is a beautiful sequel to her matin occupations, when she displays before the faithful all her energy

and grandeur—all her glorious privileges—summons them to join in her most exulting anthems, to listen to the proclamation of the invariable tenets of her faith, and to bow down in awe while she repeats the miraculous sounds which change the offerings on her altar into the body and blood of Him who died for the redemption of mankind. The early sun gleams upon her tabernacle while those heavenly functions are in progress. When that sun is about to go down, when all nature is about to sink into repose, while

“The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,”

while the tenants of the grove are warbling their last hymns in that low tone of happiness, and love, and thanksgiving for the blessings of the day, which is so infinitely more endearing than the most thrilling song of the soaring lark; again does she call her flock around her, and by her psalms, and prayers, and promises, and benedictions, cheers them onward in their journey through this “valley of tears.”

It is impossible, I think, for any person of any religion, who has heard the *Magnificat* sung in one of the fine old Flemish churches, to go away with-

out feeling something of the lofty, ardent spirit of joy, by which that beautiful canticle of the Holy Virgin is, above all others, distinguished. When the moment comes for its being entoned, all the attendant clergy, the choir, and the congregation instantly arise; and, without prelude, forth at once bursts the triumphant exclamation, as if it could be no longer suppressed, “ My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour !” But that spirit, privileged though it was beyond all other human beings, fearful of its own exultation, trembles lest it should have gone too far, and falls back upon its own natural humility. But why do I rejoice in my Saviour ? It is “ because he hath regarded the humility of his handmaid ; ” and yet how can I feel otherwise than inspired with rapture, when I am assured that “ henceforth all generations shall call me blessed ? ”

Then flow on in a noble, fervid strain the praises of the Redeeming God :— “ Holy is His name ”— infinite “ His mercy to those who fear Him ; ” He hath “ scattered the proud,” “ putdown the mighty,” given abundance to the “ poor,” “ sent the rich

away empty," and received back into his arms, as a "son," the "wandering Israel;" thus fulfilling the promise he had made to "our fathers, to Abraham, and his seed for ever." To her, who was herself of that people, the hope of their eventual recall to the home in which they were once so dearly cherished—a people whom, notwithstanding the crimes which they were to expiate, she could not but love, it was a peculiar source of joy, that long as they might wander over the face of the earth, they were still to meet with that mercy which endureth from "generation to generation."

The vespers terminated with a magnificent procession, during which the descending sun still continued to shoot its unclouded beams through the great western window, rendering "pale and ineffectual" the numerous lighted torches which were carried by the clergy, and the long line of attendants, and converting into "dust of gold" the clouds of incense by which the canopy over the prelate who bore the host was preceded. The whole cathedral was illumined by a variety of colours that seemed as if they had been designed to give peculiar magnificence to the spectacle.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Blacksmith of Antwerp. The Two Misers. Tower of the Cathedral. View from the Tower. General Chassé. The late King of Holland. Chimes of Antwerp. Tomb of Rubens. St. Jacques. The Holy Family. Fac-simile of Calvary. Church of St. Andrew. The Museum. Departure for Liege. Varied aspect of the Country. Louvaine. The Library. Former Manufactories. Expulsion of the Weavers. Their Guildhall. The University. The Hôtel de Ville. The Cathedral.

I SPENT some hours the following morning in the cathedral, admiring the numberless works of art by which it is ornamented, many of them master-pieces of Rubens, and well known to amateurs of every description, if not from actual inspection, at least through the eloquent panegyrics of Sir Joshua Reynolds. The curious visitor, before entering the cathedral, should not fail to look at the iron cover of the pump near the foot of the tower ; it is said to be the work of Quentin Matsys, the “blacksmith of Antwerp,” of whom it is

related that he had conceived a violent affection for the daughter of a painter, but that her father having resolved to give her in marriage to no suitor, except of his own profession, he (the blacksmith) immediately resolved to abandon his trade, in which he had obtained celebrity for his many ingenious productions in brass and iron, and to adopt that which would qualify him to obtain the great object of his solicitude. He speedily became more eminent as a painter than he had been even in his previous pursuits, and he eventually won the hand of the lady. Those who have visited Windsor Castle will remember his celebrated painting of the "Two Misers." The museum at Antwerp, however, has the good fortune to possess his master-piece, the "Descent from the Cross," the heads in which are held to be equal to any ever produced by Raffaelle.

Wishing to ascend the tower, it was with some difficulty we obtained admittance, as the keeper happened to be out of the way. Some workmen, however, who were engaged in repairing the pinnacles which were knocked down by the Dutch artillery under General Chassé, when they were bombarding the town from the citadel in 1830,

having opened the door on the inside, we made our way to the upper gallery, whence the prospect is superb. Glimpses may be discerned of the spires of Brussels, Malines, and even of Louvaine, and also of Ghent, Bruges, Flushing, and Bergen-op-Zoom. The winding course of the Scheldt we distinctly traced ; while we were observing it, the steamer from London appeared at a distance of nearly twenty miles, with its black smoke curling upward in the calm atmosphere. The fine old city itself lay beneath us, like a picture painted by one of the old Flemish masters, with its numerous churches, convents, and magnificent public buildings, its elaborate and extensive fortifications, and its peculiarly fine citadel, forming one of the most attractive features in the whole scene, on account of the chivalrous resistance made within its walls by Chassé in 1832 against its French assailants. Heroic as was the conduct of the Dutch general upon that occasion, one can never recall to mind the circumstances which gave rise to it, without abhorring the author of so much unnecessary bloodshed. The obstinacy of the late King of Holland, in attempting to retain possession of the capitol of a city which had already ceased to be a

part of his dominions, and which he perfectly well knew could not be held for any length of time against the forces assembled to wrest it from him, can never be too severely stigmatised. One of the workmen very civilly shewed us over the *ninety-nine* bells which form the chimes. The smallest bell is full fifteen inches in diameter. A full-grown man might easily sleep without inconvenience in the largest. When this wonderful production of the foundry was baptized, according to the old religious custom of the Netherlands, Charles V. stood sponsor for it. We had not the good fortune to hear this Carillon give out its harmonies.

The artist-pilgrim will no doubt make his way to the tomb of Rubens, which he will find immediately behind the high altar in the beautiful church of St. Jaques, a perfect gem for its paintings, carvings in wood, variegated marbles, and richly painted windows. Here also he will find one of the most precious of all the works of that great master—"The Holy Family"—in which the portrait of the painter appears under the figure of St. George, those of his two wives as Martha and Mary Magdalen, that of his father as St. Jerome,

of his grandfather as Time, and of his son as an angel. It is a most *lovely* picture, a characteristic which does not usually belong to the works of Rubens. Sir Joshua Reynolds particularly recommends it to students as a perfect specimen of colouring. "It is as bright," he says, "as if the sun shone upon it."

I went, of course, to see one of the greatest religious curiosities in Belgium — the representation of Calvary, in the Dominican church. It is literally a small hill, formed artificially of rock-work ; on the summit are the crosses, bearing images of the Redeemer and the two thieves ; on the declivities are several kneeling statues of patriarchs, prophets, and saints, and at the foot is a grotto, copied from the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, containing another figure of Christ. I own I did not much admire this elaborate specimen of ingenuity.

There is a carved pulpit in St. Andrew's Church, which is reputed to be the finest model of wood-work existing in the Netherlands. Here also is to be seen a monument raised in honour of two English ladies named Curle, who had been ladies in waiting to Mary Queen of Scots. Attached to the

monument is a portrait of the ill-fated sovereign, whose name always stirs up our deepest sympathies.

Although the museum of Antwerp is open to the public only on Sundays, on account, I presume, of the number of students, male and female, who assemble there during the week-days, engaged in copying its best pictures, nevertheless we, as strangers, were very civilly admitted by the doorkeeper. We found every part of the gallery redolent with the oils and other ingredients used by the young artists, all of whom were most industriously occupied in pursuing their labours. If I might judge from a hasty glance of the many copies I saw in progress, I should say that they generally exhibited highly promising specimens of the talents of these young painters.

When I add, that in this museum may be seen several pictures by Rubens, Quentin Matsys, Francis Floris (usually honoured with the title of the Flemish Raffaelle), Vandyk (the celebrated portrait painter), de Vos, and Titian, I need not remark that it abounds in attractions of the very first order. The chair of Rubens is preserved here under a glass case.

Returning to Brussels, we took our places for Liege. On our way thither Mr. Bellew paid a flying visit to Louvaine, a name more familiar, perhaps, than that of any other city in Belgium to British and Irish Catholic ears, as it was in the celebrated university established there, in the early part of the fifteenth century, that many of their ecclesiastical students, and the sons of the Catholic nobility and gentry, received that education which the penal laws denied them at home. The country towards Louvaine, and still more towards Liege, begins to assume a much more varied aspect than the lower parts of the Netherlands, which, with but few exceptions, present one entire almost level surface, peculiarly well adapted for the railway system. The territory, particularly after leaving Malines, becomes undulating, the cuttings are more extensive, and Tirlemont is approached through a tunnel of considerable length (1000 yards). The river Dyle, to which the railroad runs parallel occasionally, presents many agreeable prospects, and beyond the town of Louvaine is seen a vast extent of forest, said to be a part of the ancient forest of Soignies. It is in this district that the most extensive coal-

beds of Belgium are found. Piles of excellent turf may also be observed by the roadside, which mark at once the difference of character in the country we had now to traverse.

A few hours were sufficient to enable my friend to visit the “lions” of Louvaine, the more especially as he was most kindly assisted upon the occasion by one of the members of the university, whom he had accidentally met on his way to that institution. The library is one of the most magnificent chambers of the kind in Europe. It existed more than a century before the university itself, having been originally (1317) constructed as a Guildhall, by the weavers of Louvaine, then a wealthy, numerous, and at all times, until their expulsion, a most turbulent portion of the population. It is recorded that in 1360 there were from three to four hundred cloth manufactories in Louvaine, which afforded employment to 150,000 artizans. The chronicler (Justus Lipsius), upon whose authority this statement chiefly rests, adds that a few minutes before the men engaged in those establishments were accustomed to go home to take their meals, the great bell of the cathedral was tolled, in

order to caution parents to prevent their children from appearing in the streets, lest they should be trampled down by the multitudes issuing from the manufactories.

Acts of the government, of the most impolitic character, subsequently drove all these people from Louvaine, in consequence of various tumults in which they were engaged. Many of them settled in England, whither they were followed by their employers. They most materially assisted in establishing amongst us the woollen manufactures, for which our country has since become so eminent. Their Guildhall was a superb structure, displaying a fine taste ; no expense seems to have been spared to render it worthy of its opulent proprietors. According to the fashion of the times, it was most elaborately ornamented with antique carvings in wood, which are still in admirable preservation. The colleges of the university at one time amounted to nearly fifty in number, giving to the city an appearance not unlike Oxford, and frequented by from five to six thousand students. Scarcely twenty colleges now remain ; the number of the students has dwindled down to four or five hundred. The

whole locality in consequence, as well as the city itself, present a deserted and gloomy appearance, the population having been reduced from two hundred thousand souls, which were at one time numbered within its walls, to nearly twenty thousand.

There is, nevertheless, a solemn, religious, and classic air about Louvaine, which invests it with an interesting character. The Hôtel de Ville is admitted to be the most beautiful edifice of the kind in Europe. It abounds in traceries and ornaments of the Gothic strain of poetical conception, most exquisitely elaborated. The dilapidations caused by time from the period (1463) when it was finished, have been recently restored with a degree of skill and genius, not unworthy of the artists by whom the original chiseling was executed.

Not exempted from the fate to which almost all old ecclesiastical edifices have been at one time or another sacrificed, the cathedral of Louvaine (dedicated to St. Peter), which was founded in 1040, was twice burnt down. A tower, of the extraordinary altitude of five hundred and thirty feet, formerly attached to it, was blown down in 1604, and has not since been restored. It contains a good

many pictures by the elder masters, which are more curious than inspiring. The scholar will be disposed to pay a visit to the tower in which Janse-nius composed his peculiar theological works. The stranger cannot be long in Louvaine without feeling, from the not unpleasant odours which meet him in all quarters, that he is amidst numerous breweries. The produce of these establishments, which is in high repute, exceeds 200,000 casks per annum, and is consumed all over Belgium. Some part is exported.

CHAPTER XV.

Arrival at Liege. Its busy appearance. Quentin Durward. The Wonder of Liege. Mineral Fountains. Caverns. Chaudfontaine. Its many Attractions. Beautiful Landscape. Young Blanchiseuses. A Dwarf. A Bible Distributor. Translations of the Scriptures. The Warm Fountain. Railway to Cologne. The Brigand Idriel. Scheme for his Capture.

THE rail-road terminates within three miles of Liege; the remaining distance is accomplished by omnibuses, one of which conducted me to the "Pommelette," a very good hotel, and much frequented by mercantile men, of whom I saw great numbers here, impressing me at once with the importance of this city, as the principal commercial city of Belgium. It strongly reminded me, upon first passing through its narrow, dingy, smoky streets, filled with dirty-looking houses, from which proceeded incessant sounds of hammers and anvils, of Birmingham and Sheffield. Its principal ma-

nufactory is that of cannon and fire-arms of every kind. They are said to be inferior to those of France and England, but they are much cheaper ; a good double-barrelled gun may be had for twenty or thirty francs. The workmen generally carry on their several operations at home ; some being employed in forging the bars, others in turning them into the rough barrel, others in boring, and so on with all the other branches of the trade.

Notwithstanding the gloomy atmosphere of Liege, and its inferiority to the greater number of the cities of Belgium, in an architectural point of view, nevertheless its murkiness is much relieved by the business-like bustle and hum of industry which prevail in all quarters. There are many iron-mines in the neighbourhood, and also extensive coal floors. The latter have been worked not only to the verge of the town, but beneath it, so much so as to undermine many of the streets and houses. The outskirts present a succession of highly picturesque scenery, characterized by lofty hills, and the broad valley of the Meuse, which is navigable to the sea, and here forms a junction with the Ourthe and the Vesdre. From the summit of the hill of St.

Walberg, upon which several churches and palaces have been erected, the views of the country all round constitute a panorama of the most diversified and animated description.

Those who have read Scott's charming "*Quentin Durward*," will no doubt set about exploring the localities of Liege with peculiar feelings of interest. But those feelings will be of very short duration, for Sir Walter Scott's *Liege* bears no more resemblance of the real city than it does to Edinburgh. He has indeed caught the spirit of its former turbulent character, and related with tolerable fidelity, as a chronicler, some of the most exciting passages of its history, for which he is indebted to Monstrelet and Philip de Comines. But upon almost all points of topography, he has allowed his imagination a license, which is rather surprising, considering that if he had paid only a short visit to the scene of his romance, or even taken the trouble to make himself acquainted with it, through the "spectacles of books," he might have easily avoided all the errors into which he has fallen—errors, however, which, after all, do not impair the attractions of the story.

There are very few objects in Liege worth the attention of a traveller, except the Church of St. Jacques, the Bishop's palace, and the modern university. The former is generally called the "Wonder of Liege." It is constructed principally in the Gothic style, intermingled with what has been not inappropriately called the "coquetry" and graces of Arabian art ; it was founded about the year 1014, during the reign of Henry II., Emperor of Germany. It was originally attached to a Cenobite convent, in the bosom of a vast forest by which Liege was then surrounded. The nave is vast and majestic, and yet so light in appearance that it seems to lift the soul : the whole style of decoration is singularly beautiful. The arches, says Mr. Hope, whose architectural skill and taste need no praise from me, are elegantly fringed. It possesses wide and splendid windows of painted glass, elegantly mullioned net-work screens, reeded pillars, branching into rich tracery, studded with embossed ornaments, containing within them gay Arabescoes, medallions of saints, sovereigns, and prelates innumerable. Amongst the medallions, are portraits of the kings, queens, prophets, and prophetesses of

Scripture, with their names and the verses relating to them, which form on each side of the nave a continued inscription, written in Gothic characters.

The whole of this district of Belgium offers many objects of great interest to geologists. Not far from it commences that series of warm fountains of mineral waters which, taking an eastern and north-eastern direction, extend to Spa, Aix-la-Chapelle, and so on to Germany. To the south are many hills and mountains, bearing decided tokens of volcanic action, presenting external features of the most diversified and extraordinary character, and containing within their bosom caverns of great extent, filled with stalactites, fossil bones of men and animals, and other very curious objects, of which specimens may be seen in the museum at Liege, and also rendered particularly interesting by the romantic lakes, galleries, vaulted chambers and halls which have been recently discovered in their recesses. It is a country, in fact, which has not been yet sufficiently explored ; it has even a language of its own—the Walloon—

which is said to resemble the old French of Normandy more than any other dialect. In former ages, the Walloons, like the Swiss, served in the army of any state that would pay them.

From Liege we took an excursion to Chaudfontaine, by a diligence which plies twice a day between those two places. The distance being little more than five miles, we found ourselves in about an hour before the Hôtel des Bains, having journeyed through a very charming country, and by the light of a brilliant sun, which was peculiarly refreshing to us after leaving the dismal climate of Liege. Outside of the hotel benches were arranged, on which were seated several invalids, who were undergoing a course of warm bathing. The baths are under the superintendence of government, and are got up in a very handsome style. The hot spring rises in an island of the Vesdre just hard by, and is pumped up by a wheel turned by the current of the river. The waters of the fountain are remarkably clear; the valley in which the village is situated is extremely picturesque; the river abounds in grayling, offering sport to the angler;

the country around affords many enchanting prospects, and most agreeable walks and rides for those who are in search of health or amusement.

I was quite struck with this pleasant village, and wished that I could repose a few days within its quiet and beautiful retreats. While I stood upon its wooden bridge, looking towards the east, I ranged in fancy over a lofty hill in that direction, whose declivities and summits were ornamented by groups of trees, dressed out in all their summer foliage. The Vesdre beneath me, swollen by the late rains, and tinged with a yellow colour, rolled rapidly through the arches, sending out angry voices as it pursued its course. A cascade just near, added to the chorus which they formed ; and, as if for my particular entertainment at the moment, an Italian organist stood for a while at the end of the bridge, playing some of Mozart's most exquisite airs, whose modulations seemed to receive fresh powers of fascination from the hoarse murmurs of the neighbouring waters.

The shrubs and green turf of the island were spread with clothes which had been just washed in the river. While the sun was drying them, the

fair and youthful *blanchiseuses* amused themselves by various games ; some running over the island in chase of one another ; some laughing, some singing, some dancing ; all full of merriment uncontrollable. A wearied traveller, dressed in a blue blouse, now and then trudged his way over the bridge, stopping a few minutes to admire the industry and talents of a dwarf, who, born without arms, nevertheless taught himself to write with his toes, which he used with all the facility that fingers could have given him.

As a characteristic of the times in which we live, I may mention among the passengers on the bridge, an English Bible distributor, attended by a youth from Highgate, whom he appeared to have captivated by his discourses. He addressed me, at the same time placing in my hand a tract in the French language, very neatly printed at the “ Belgian Evangelical Repository,” in Brussels, and entitled, “ Why does your curate forbid you to read the Bible in the vulgar tongue ? ” The form of the question is odd enough, for assuming the veto to have been issued, it would extend, upon the hypothesis, only to Bibles in the vulgar tongue,

and not to the Greek or Latin ! The tract was in the form of a dialogue between a messenger engaged in carrying about Bibles for distribution, and a labouring man, to whom he offers a copy, but whom he could not persuade at first to accept it, because the peasant is made to say, that his curate had forbidden him to read that book. In the course of the dialogue, the poor man is made to declare, that even if he did read the Bible, he could not understand much of it, and that he preferred saying his rosary—a well-known form of Catholic prayer—always repeated in the language of the country where it is used. The tractarian, however, is pleased to represent the ignorant peasant as reciting his rosary in Latin ! My eye happening to light on this passage, I pointed out to my evangelical acquaintance the pretty chapel of the village, where, if he attended in the evening, he would very probably hear the rosary repeated, not in Latin, but in the language of the congregation. These Bible distributors and their employers are all, I really believe, well-intentioned persons ; but marvellous is the number of chimeras which they put forth in their publications, as forming parts of the faith or

discipline of the Catholic Church. Every well-instructed member of that church perfectly well knows that he is not forbidden to read the Bible ; that it was first translated into Latin by one of the brilliant line of fathers belonging to that church ; that it was first printed in the original Hebrew and Greek, and first translated into all the modern languages of Europe, by members of that church ; that the English Bible used by the dissenters, of every hue of doctrine, is for the most part only a copy of the one originally translated into our language by English Catholic clergymen, who were obliged to seek refuge in the colleges of Douay from the persecutions of the British government ; and that in the United Kingdom at this moment, reprints of that admirable translation may be found in the hands of everybody who chooses to purchase them. The veto of the curé, or rather of the church itself, is not against the reading of the Bible, but against the interpretation of it by any person not duly authorized by her to perform a task admitted on all hands to be at once so delicate and so arduous.

Towards the west is a double row of poplars,

between which there is a handsome promenade along the margin of the Vesdre, whose waters are said to be remarkably cold at all times of the year. This coldness is the more remarkable, as the springs which are found in the island just mentioned are rather warm ($32^{\circ} 50'$), though more temperate than those of Aix-la-Chapelle, or Borcette. Nor is the interest which this pleasant village excites at all diminished by the constant clacking of a water-mill hard by, which is connected with a series of forges for the manufacture of guns and pistols. While I was standing on the bridge, my eye was attracted to the heights beyond, by the sudden rush of a number of workmen down the hill. They had not descended far when a loud explosion followed, caused by the blasting of rocks in the line marked out for the prolongation of the line of the railway from Liege to Cologne. It must have been the most expensive of any of the Belgian railways, as it has required a great number of cuttings and tunnels through the hills, and of bridges over the rivers which it passes on its course.

Not far from Chaud-fontaine are the ruins of the famous stronghold of Chievremont, built during

the times of the earliest kings of France, upon the summit of a mass of rocks inaccessible on all sides. In the tenth century it was occupied by a brigand named Idriel, who supported a numerous train of followers by plundering the country around him, fearless of all consequences, as he was sure to find an impregnable refuge from his enemies in his castle. His motto was, as the old chroniclers say—"The enemy of all men, the friend of God alone!" His sanguinary proceedings roused the anger of the Bishop of Liege, who meditated all kinds of projects for seizing on the castle by surprise, but to no effect, as the walls, besides being so well fortified by nature, were always carefully guarded. At length the birth of an heir to Idriel offered the much desired opportunity for the accomplishment of the prelate's designs. The brigand despatched a messenger to him to request that he would repair to the castle to baptize the infant. The bishop eagerly accepted the invitation, and proceeded to the chateau, attended by a numerous retinue, as if with the view of giving to the ceremony the greatest possible degree of pomp and pageantry. His followers all wore coats of mail beneath their clerical

dresses, which served also to conceal their weapons of war. When they were all assembled in the church, at a given signal, they threw off their external habits, and proceeded to cut down without mercy the guardians of the castle. Idriel, finding himself betrayed, grapsed his child in his arms, and taking with him also his only daughter, he precipitated himself from the walls, and perished, together with his children, on the spot. In the place where the castle stood there is now a small chapel.

CHAPTER XVI.

Visit to Spa. Castle of Franchimont. Its concealed Treasures. Appearance of Spa. Its Public Establishments. Its Waters. Their dangerous Effects. Ardennes Ponies. Country round Spa. Curious Cave. Toys of Spa. Return to Liege. Departure from Liege. Serang. Messrs. Cockerill's Establishments. Vineyards. Banks of the Meuse. Huy. Its Citadel. Journey to Namur. Extraordinary Rocks. Their strange Configurations. A beautiful Solitude-View of Namur.

WE had an excellent dinner at the table d'hôte of Chaud-fontaine, after which we intended to return to Liege, but a diligence coming up on its way to Spa, we mounted it, and immediately drove off. The road is for a part of the way parallel with the charming banks of the Vesdre as far as Pepinster; thence it turns off to the right and proceeds to Spa. The ancient village of Theuse, in the neighbourhood, is rendered peculiarly interesting to all lovers of romance, as having been formerly the capital of the Marquisate of Franchimont, the

the ruins of whose renowned castle are seen towering over a pile of lofty rocks. If any credit be due to the legendary history of the castle, there is a vast treasure buried in its vaults, amassed by its lords from time to time by plundering the adjacent country. The treasure is kept in an iron chest, and guarded by a demon in the garb of a huntsman, who is constantly sitting upon it. No human hand can draw the bolts by which the lid of this chest is made fast until some favoured mortal shall arrive who can repeat the very words of the spell which the last lord pronounced when he committed the treasure to the care of the demon-huntsman.

Spa is also within the ancient Marquisate of Franchimont, and was a miserable little village until its mineral springs were discovered in the fourteenth century. It is now a very handsome though irregularly built town situated in a beautiful valley of the Ardennes mountains. Its general appearance is cheerful, and a visitor would at once say that it seems the very abode of health. It was for centuries the most frequented watering-place in Europe, and is celebrated as the spot where monarchs

often assembled in Congress to discuss and arrange their affairs. We found it almost wholly deserted, though in the height of the season.

The establishments constructed for the accommodation and amusement of the visitors are all upon a very splendid scale. The principal are the Redoute, and a very handsome colonnade erected at the expense of Peter the Great, as a memorial of his gratitude for the benefit which he received from the waters of the spring that rises in the very centre of the town. The Redoute is a very extensive building, containing within its compass a ball-room, rooms for gambling, a café, and a theatre. The colonnade includes a large pump-room, where those who are able to take exercise may walk when the weather is unfavourable.

The waters of Spa are carried in well-sealed bottles to all parts of Europe. They are considered as particularly useful in cases of bilious and nervous disorders. They are strongly impregnated with iron—more so, the chemists say, than any other mineral spring which has been yet discovered. They are, moreover, so replete with carbonic acid gas, that they require to be used at first with very

great caution, as they have been known in some instances to fly to the head and to produce dangerous effects. A friend of mine told me that his memory was so much affected by the first glass of the spring, which he drank early in the morning, that he forgot to eat his breakfast !

The finely wooded heights which overhang the town, present on all sides prospects of the most varied and interesting description. Desirous of becoming more nearly acquainted with them, we hired a pair of the capital Ardennes ponies, which abound in Spa, and set off at full gallop. I placed the bridle upon my steed's head, and desired him to take me wherever he liked. He, I suppose, knowing what he ought to do upon the occasion, conducted me at once up the nearest hill, along the bed of a winter torrent ; then descending by a bridle-road, he trotted on until we found ourselves upon a splendid Mac-Adamised road, whence I had a vast view, limited only by the horizon, over fine plains and slightly undulating grounds, towards the Prussian boundary. The morning was mild and balmy, and I came easily to the conclusion that the invalid who cannot recover his health in

Spa and its environs, may as well make up his mind at once for a journey towards that bourne whence there is no return.

I was anxious to pay a visit to Adseaux, where, I was informed, a river precipitated itself into a natural grotto, taking its course subsequently through a subterraneous channel of several miles in extent, to the cave of Remouchamps, which it traverses. Although I made all due inquiry as to the locality of Adseaux, I missed my way. Some few years ago a discovery of a new cavern was made by an Englishman, the entry to which is through the floor of the cave of Remouchamps, which had long been well known. It is much more extensive than the latter, and is filled with stalactites. The rock in which these caverns are situated is composed of limestone, alternating with clay slate. Near Spa may be seen the ruins of the castle once occupied by William de la Marck, the celebrated "Boar of Ardennes." The shop windows of the town display, in abundance, specimens of the wooden toys for which Spa is famous. They are after the fashion of our Tonbridge ware, but rather more elegantly painted. The wood of

which they are manufactured is steeped in the mineral springs before it is used, and when taken out, is curiously stained by the iron ingredient of the waters. Unfortunately for the many poor artisans who have been brought up to this species of employment, the rush of the fashionable crowds of hypochondriaes has been for some time towards the wells of Nassau and Bavaria, although the doctors assure us that there is hardly any malady affecting the digestive or nervous system which may not be relieved, if not even effectually cured, by the internal or external application of one or other of the fountains in Spa and its environs. If one glass be sufficiently potent to make a man forget his breakfast, and five be certain to make him quite drunk, I confess I should like to have seen the Great Peter after his morning dose of no fewer than twenty-one glasses of this formidable beverage !

Leaving behind us the numerous empty, and by no means economical hotels of this place, the attractions of its Ardennes mutton, which almost tempted us to prolong our visit, and the pretty scene of the loves of Lubin and Annette, celebrated by Marmontel, we returned to Liege, where we

were once more immersed in all the horrors of that dismal atmosphere—the more dismal to us after having enjoyed the pure skies of Spa and Chaudfontaine. We therefore set out (11th July) as early as we could upon our journey southward, quitting Liege by the magnificent quay of the Meuse, under a deluge that had been pouring down all the morning. By the time we reached Seraing, however, the heavy clouds began to dissipate, and to reveal some azure fields in the heavens, which promised more agreeable weather.

Columns of fire rising in the air out of numerous chimneys, indicated our approach to the celebrated manufacturing establishments of the Messrs. Cockerill, justly styled, when they were in the height of their prosperity, one of the wonders of Belgium. The principal edifice visible from the road, was formerly the palace of the Prince Bishops of Liege. It subsequently became the property of the crown, and was purchased by the late Mr. Cockerill, who had previously erected in Liege several foundries for the fabrication of machinery. Upon its being discovered that coal and iron ore were to be obtained in the immediate neighbourhood of each

other, within the precincts of the land adjacent to the palace, he enclosed the whole within a high wall, beneath which flows the Meuse. Thus, within the limits of one establishment, were produced coal, iron, steam-engines, and all kinds of iron machinery, for which the proprietors received orders. In consequence, however, of the vicissitudes in trade which had occurred in Belgium, soon after its separation from Holland, and particularly since the contracts for the railroads have been nearly all executed, the works at Seraing have been conducted lately upon a limited scale. They are said to have, at one time, given employment constantly to upwards of two thousand men.

Seraing consists of a single street, of nearly a mile in length, and occupies a valley, over which tower on each side lofty cliffs, crowned with villas and convents. The human "*face divine*" does not, certainly, shew itself to much advantage in these districts; but, by way of compensation, it was pleasant to observe that the inhabitants in general, male and female, were comfortably clothed. The wind, which had been blowing coldly all the morning, ceased at noon, when the sun broke

through the clouds, and bestowed a cheerful aspect to the banks of the Meuse, near which we still pursued our course. Vineyards began already to make their appearance, interspersed with neat cottages, and occasionally with immense formations of limestone in an inclined direction, and huge walls of brown stone, which give a wild and peculiar character to the scenery. Plantations of hops were now and then to be observed amongst the vineyards, and also gardens for the production of vegetables wherever strips of cultivable soil were to be found between the enormous cliffs.

Nearer to the river, on either side, there are tracts of alluvial soil, every part of which was turned to advantage, the whole teeming with wheat, oats, barley, and what is here called saigle—that is, bere,—chiefly used, when mixed with a small proportion of wheaten flour, for bread. Lucerne, clover, and poppies were also abundant on the margin of the river, and occasionally considerable fields of pasturage.

The approach to Huy is striking. Towering high above the town is its magnificent citadel, not long before the Belgian revolution repaired, and

greatly extended upon the most approved plans, by English engineers, under the direction of Colonel Blanshard, and at the expense of the King of Holland. It is seated upon a lofty and precipitous rock, and completely commands the passage of the Meuse, by which this old town, wearing the aspect of a former age, but still hardy and vigorous in its condition, is divided. Beneath the citadel we beheld the cathedral, and in every part of the town the steeples and spires of many churches. All round were very curious-looking rocks, like the fragments of ruined castles.

We stopped at the Hôtel de la Poste—beds not bad—dinner indifferent—wines not drinkable. According to my habit, I repaired to the bridge, to fix in my memory some general idea of the town. To the south, the fortress, the cathedral—beyond the fortress, a bold ridge of rocks running to a considerable distance parallel with the river, and in some parts well wooded—beneath it some of the streets of the town. To the north, a long street of rather mean-looking houses near the bank of the Meuse—which rolled beneath me, turbulent and yellow from the recent rains. The whole aspect of

the place was cheerless, owing perhaps, in a great measure, to the state of the weather, which, though sunny and warm in the early part of the afternoon, became exceedingly cold and cloudy in the evening.

I ascended the fortress by an easy winding road, which terminates at the gate. Thence I proceeded by flights of stairs, and rambled at discretion over every part of the pile, without meeting a single human being. The vaults are chiefly excavated out of the solid rock, and the thick massive walls would seem capable of offering great resistance to a host of assailants. But strong as the whole bulwark may be, I fancy it could not long hold out against the shells and bombs and powerful artillery of the present day. Moreover it is commanded by the neighbouring heights. In one of the suburbs may be traced the ruins of an abbey founded by Peter the Hermit, the preacher of the first Crusade. His remains were interred in the abbey.

We left Huy by diligence at five o'clock in the morning (12th July) for Namur, having the Meuse, which had been hitherto to our left, now on our right. We passed by several factories, one of

which was a paper-mill, established by the late Mr. Cockerill. The weather was still remarkably cold. The river, though navigable, exhibited no sign of commerce. We had scarcely advanced three leagues from Huy when our attention was drawn to the extraordinary features of the limestone rocks which presented themselves for a considerable distance along the opposite side of the river. Some of these started up to a great height, isolated, and of slender shape, bearing a close resemblance to so many towers belonging to fortifications, which it scarcely required any force of imagination to trace in the masses of rock from which they stood out. Some of these tower-like columns were clustered close together, as if for the purpose of strengthening each other.

As we advanced, a still more interesting succession of these sports of nature became visible on our left, the great designer passing from one side of the river to the other, apparently while in some of her most fanciful and capricious moods of creation. The objects shaped out in a thousand varying forms, were upon a more gigantic scale, hoary with age, indented by many a winter's violent rain, and

exhibiting frequently horizontal strata of black marble, which added not a little to the peculiarity of their appearance, especially where the formations stretched inwards like perpendicular walls, as if to guard some once proud, but now ruined, capital of the elder days. These mural precipices, sublime in their effect, from their great height, vast extent, and solid construction, were crowned occasionally with round castles, the work also of nature, following up the idea of fortifying the whole of that line, and commanding the passage of the noble river below. High above the most elevated of these towers, a falcon was observed soaring on his expanded wings, engaged in pursuit of quarry, which seemed destined soon to become his prey. It was a meet accessory to the picture we had been contemplating with such profound interest.

As if to diversify the prospect, a deep ravine suddenly presented itself to the view, in which, amidst rich foliage, were embosomed a charming villa, two or three neat white cottages, and a small church with its tapering spire. The smoke curling from the chimney-tops of the mansion and the cottages, shewed that they were not unoccupied.

One could not avoid associating ideas of happiness with that scene of beautiful solitude.

Further on, those fine rocky walls were still continued, but the most imposing effect having been apparently yielded to those already passed, those which now came within sight were veiled within a long line of poplar trees. By degrees the sublime descended to gracefulness; variety of form still kept up the charm of a picture perpetually changing, as if under the influence of some scene-shifter possessing magic power over the whole of this remarkable territory, and shewing occasionally the most skilful contrasts between ranges of barren rock and gentle declivities clothed in rich green herbage, until at length this procession of unrivalled grandeur and loveliness, having reached its termination, it was succeeded by a style of scenery altogether rustic in its character, until at length the fortresses, steeples, and ample domes of Namur, came within our horizon, glistening under the varying lights of the noon-day sun, and reminding me forcibly of my first view of Constantinople.

CHAPTER XVII.

Namur. Church of St. Loup. Jesuit College. Journey to Dinant. First View of Dinant. Origin of its Name. The Cave of Trou de Hans. Road to the Cave. The Royal Hunting Lodge. Pretty Scenery. Forest of Ardennes. Its abundant Game. Open Country. Its Hungarian Appearance. Our Voiturier. The Village of Hans. M. Lefevre. Discovery of the Cave.

NAMUR is seated near the junction of the Sambre and the Meuse, a position which, combined with the neighbouring heights, their richly cultivated declivities, gardens, masses of fine foliage, villas, vineyards, and scattered hamlets, the two magnificent rivers, one of which comes as a tributary from France, renders it singularly picturesque. It has nearly twenty thousand inhabitants, who find ample employment in the quarries of valuable marble, and the coal and iron mines in its neighbourhood, and in the manufacture of brass ware and cutlery. It is called the "Belgian Sheffield." It has been

the scene of much strife in its time, and especially during the war between the English and French, during the reign of William III. Sterne would have us believe that uncle Toby was present at the re-capture of this city by the English in 1695, after a siege of ten weeks, and that his much boasted wound was received on the point of the “advanced counterscarp, before the gate of St. Nicholas; which enclosed the great sluice in one of the toises, from the returning angle of the demi-bastion of St. Roche”—a description sufficiently minute, but which, I fear, would prove of little assistance to any military traveller, who would endeavour to find out the said counterscarp, sluice, or demi-bastion, at the present day. The history of the siege was written by Racine, and forms the subject of one of the odes of Boileau.

The cathedral is of comparatively recent construction, having been finished as late as 1767. It is dedicated in honour of St. Aubin, whose relics it contains, is constructed in the Corinthian order, surmounted by a beautiful dome, and may be considered as one of the handsomest modern churches in Belgium. The most interesting ecclesiastical edifice

in Namur is, however, that of St. Loup, which was erected in the year 1642. The vaulted roof is composed of solid white stone, most elaborately chased in the Arabesque style, all executed by the hand of a single artist, a Jesuit, under whose superintendence the temple was raised from its foundation. The roof is sustained by twelve rustic columns of highly polished porphyry and red jasper, with Ionic capitals; and the floor is of variegated marbles, the produce of the neighbouring quarries. The confessionals are also of marble, richly carved; and the sides of the high altar present a variety of the same material, which, in every part of the church, is also gilt to an extent that rather palls upon the eye.

The Jesuits, to whom this church belongs, have established a college also in Namur, under the tutelage of “*Notre Dame de la Paix*.” It is understood to be exceedingly well conducted, and upon very economical terms. The scope of its studies embraces, courses in grammar, literature, ancient and modern, rhetoric, mathematics, philosophy, zoology, botany, chemistry, algebra, and practical geometry. Public examinations are held in the

month of August. There are some English pupils in this establishment, but the great majority of the students are Belgian.

From Namur to Dinant, we still pursued the charming valley of the Meuse. The scenery, for some time after quitting the former city, was indeed of a less striking character than that which we had witnessed on our approach to it; but as we advanced on our course, the river presented a wider expanse, rolling more rapidly and with a grander effect, between bold and lofty declivities, sometimes densely wooded, sometimes utterly barren of vegetation and blanched by age.

The first view of Dinant constitutes a very peculiar and imposing picture. Immediately above the town rises, in a broken pyramidal form, to a great height, an accumulation of limestone cliffs, crowned by one of those costly fortresses which were arranged to be erected under the terms of the treaty of 1815. The cathedral, with its lofty and singular tower, partaking somewhat of the shape of a Chinese pagoda, occupies a commanding position, and the principal street runs along the bank of the river, which here opens out still more widely than

before. The city is a very ancient one, and is said to have taken its name from Diana, who is supposed to have had a temple here dedicated to her worship; it has figured a good deal in the wars between Louis XI. and the Duke of Burgundy. The population, at the present day, does not much exceed five thousand souls.

I have already stated that in most of the mountains in this district of Belgium, numerous and very curious caverns have been discovered from time to time. Having been informed by our esteemed friend, the Rev. Thomas Tyrwhitt (vicar of Whitterborne church, near Blandford, Dorsetshire), whose name I have already mentioned, and whom we had again the good fortune to meet at Dinant, that the cave about fifteen miles distant from this place, called the "Trou de Hans," was well worth examination, and that he and his amiable lady had just returned from visiting it, we engaged a voiture to proceed thither forthwith.

Quitting Dinant by the road which leads between a steep declivity and a remarkably tall isolated mass of rock, to which the people here have given the well-known chivalrous name of Bayard,

we soon gained the open country. The morning was bright and genial; butterflies were chasing each other along the fields and hedges, and we met several peasant girls wending their way to the market with baskets of flowers. It was not long before we entered upon a tract of forest, a part of which King Leopold has purchased for his hunting expeditions. He has constructed upon a very picturesque eminence a hunting-lodge, which, without any pretensions to show, bears about it every sign of convenience and comfort. The cottage is on the right of the road; the forest is on the left, and presents here and there openings in which bridle-roads have been formed, for the accommodation of the royal sportsman and his companions. We passed also in the way by two or three other handsome villas, one of which belongs to the Duchess of Beaufort.

A pretty little scene presented itself to our view as we drove along. In a smiling valley on our left the waters of a brook were dammed up until they formed a sufficient power to turn a mill beneath them. The mill seemed full of business, and in its neighbourhood were a few rustic cottages, which

seemed quite away from all the cares of the world. A little farther on we came upon a deep ravine, the sides of which were well wooded with ash, oak, birch, and beech; a torrent tumbling down the rocks fell into the bottom of the ravine, producing a pleasing murmur, and along the margin of the stream which supplied the waters of the torrent there was a path, which is said to be a favourite haunt of Leopold when he visits this part of his happy kingdom. His majesty has also a farm on the left of the road, in the cultivation of which he is said to feel a lively country-gentleman-like sort of interest.

The day continued delightful; a refreshing breeze was in the air, repaying us by its balmy healthy odours for all the late cold and rainy weather which we had experienced. Corn-fields and copses served to give variety to our route, until descending towards a small stream, our voiturier informed us that it was the Lesse, which passes through the cavern we were about to visit. The forest of Ardennes here assumes a most magnificent character, extending to an apparently boundless extent on our right. We caught at some distance a glimpse of a white house, which

indicated the village of Hans. Could we have gone thither as the crow flies, we might apparently have reached it in less than half an hour; but the road takes a very circuitous course, leading us, however, through a tract of country by no means destitute of romantic features.

In this neighbourhood the Count de Kirk, formerly an officer in the guards of Napoleon, possesses an extensive property. The road now passes partly through the forest, through which the hunting-paths presented us occasionally with some charming vistas. The forest is said to abound with foxes, hares, rabbits, wild boars, and several other kinds of game. We were cheered by the notes of the thrush, the blackbird, and the nightingale, and by the sports of the beautiful squirrel, who gamboled merrily from tree to tree. Emerging from the forest, we passed through a wild and heathy country, until we reached a turn on the left, where we quitted the capital road which we had hitherto traversed, exchanging it for a rough cart-way, that threatened to upset our vehicle every moment.

The scene through which we were now passing

reminded me a good deal of my rides over the plains of Hungary. Groups of sheep, with their shepherds and shepherdesses, were assembled wherever a green oasis supplied a scanty herbage. We had a vast open horizon, and upon ascending an eminence of considerable height, our voiturier stopped awhile to rest his horses and to enable us to take a view of the country beneath, which was indeed well worthy of all the praise he gave it, including a great part of the forest of Ardennes, lying behind us, and a boundless sweep of undulating territory in the distance, permitting us to catch, far beyond all, glimpses of mountains so much the colour of the azure sky, that they were scarcely discernible from it. We drank in with renewed delight the healthy breezes which visited these rarely-trodden wilds.

Remounting our carriage, we proceeded towards our destination, observing how carefully any little spot which was at all capable of cultivation was turned to the greatest possible advantage. We had already become great friends with our voiturier, whose name was Antoine Baugné, and who shewed a great deal more of intelligence and, I

may add, of sentiment, than one generally meets in persons of his vocation. He was well acquainted with the road, and never failed to call our attention to any object which he thought might interest us. Seeing my note-book and pencil constantly in my hand, he surmised that I was preparing to give an account of my travels. He was much pleased when I asked him to give me his name, and added that I should recommend him to my countrymen who might be disposed to visit the cavern of Hans-on-Lesse.

Descending through an agreeable valley, whose declivities on either side were well stocked with sheep, we passed by the village of Epraffe, and then came within sight of the hill, not quite lofty enough to be called a mountain, within whose bosom was situated the object of our journey. The hill is thickly wooded, and the cavern opens a way through it from one side to the other, thus affording a passage to the Lesse, which had already begun to assume the appearance of a considerable river. Arriving near an old wooden bridge, which passes over it, but is wide enough only for pedestrians, Antoine was obliged to drive through the

current, which was somewhat deeper than usual, on account of the recent rains. We walked across the bridge, and followed our vehicle to the village of Hans, which was close by.

Hans has much the appearance of a Spanish village; its church and spire gave an air to the picture, which, seen from a distance, would have tempted a traveller to visit it, expecting that he might find here a neat and pleasant resting-place from the heat of the day; but true to the similitude I have stated, Hans presents every token of wretchedness: ruined cabins, broken windows, a scarcely passable road, groups of little naked urchins staring at the new comers, as if they had never seen a decently-clad person before, and numerous dunghills tainting the air. The cabaret of the place is kept by the guide, John Joseph Lefevre, who, in company with a labouring peasant named François Marée, first accidentally discovered the cavern so far back as the year 1814; but it attracted no attention until within these last few years, when a short notice of it having appeared in a scientific journal, some geologists were induced to explore it. Very few tourists, however, have taken

the trouble to go out of the usual tracks to examine this great natural curiosity. The names of the visitors which we found in the guide's book were those chiefly of Germans, few French, and still fewer English. Lefevre must have been very young when he first attempted to make his way through the cavern, for when we saw him he said he was only thirty-eight years old. His wife, to whom he had been married seven years, confesses only to the age of twenty-six. They have children, of whom two were twins, then in their cradle—fine little roll-about infants, who were playing with each other's fingers. Marée is rather an elderly man.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Cabaret of Hans. Its Parlour Ornaments. Lodge near the Cave. Entrance to the Cave. Romantic Lake. Wonderful Echoes. Straw Torches. Picture of Charon and his Bark. Navigation of the Lake. Stalactites. Beaks of Birds. Curious Drapery. Morning Star. Fish-Market. The Hall of Debarkation. Bou-
doir of Proserpine. Her Wardrobe. Sinuosities of the Cavern. Its vast extent. Club of Hercules. Grotto of Mont Blanc. Ostrich Feathers. Colossal Dome. Perilous Return. Remarks on the Cavern. Ladies advised not to enter it.

MY Spanish remembrances were not dissipated upon entering the cabaret, in the kitchen of which was one of those large chimney spaces so characteristic of the Posada, with its blazing wood fire; an old man of fourscore was in the snug corner on one side rocking the cradle, and the housewife was active in preparing various savoury stews, whose odour was by no means disagreeable to us after our morning's ride. We had armed ourselves with some cold ham and chicken and a bottle of cham-

page ; but we had no objection to preface our repast by a warm potage, which Madame placed immediately before us on an old oak table, spread with a damask cloth as white as snow, and in a parlour infinitely neater than any thing of the kind we had expected to behold in Hans.

Upon the walls of our refectory was suspended a series of coloured prints representing the various sports of the neighbouring forest of Ardennes—the shooting of partridges, and the hunting of the wild boar, the stag, and the fox. Bellew (who is a keen sportsman) laughed at the idea of the huntsman, as he is here represented, taking up the rundown fox by a handkerchief tied round his neck, instead of by the tail, which is the only artist-like mode for exhibiting Reynard to the followers of the hounds. The wooden floor of the parlour was neatly sanded. Earthen vases filled with fresh flowers were arranged on the chimney-piece ; on one side was a solid oak press ; a tall clock of the former time of chronometers reminded us of the warning minutes by the constant tick of its pendulum, and we were enabled to admire ourselves in a mirror hung in a slanting position from the wall,

in the good old fashion of our grandmothers. Our chairs were of oak, and not quite so easily moved as the japanned toys, upon whose cane seats I have been sometimes terrified to see a *fat* lady attempting to play *levity* (I mean the word in its literal, not its moral meaning) in one of our modern drawing-rooms.

Having fortified ourselves with a good luncheon, backed by the bottle of champagne of which mention has been already made, we proceeded upon our enterprise, attended by Lefevre and Marée. There is a handsome lodge near the mouth of the cavern, built, as I understood, by some person of property, who had an idea of purchasing the hill, and of thus obtaining an exclusive right to the fees receivable from visitors. He, however, subsequently abandoned his intention, eventually not finding, I presume, that the speculation was likely to be successful. The lodge is a very neat building ; we were admitted to see every part of it, and were shewn, as one of the wonders of the place, a door filled with panes of glass stained in different colours. We were desired to look through these at the country in front of the lodge. The prospect

was indeed highly picturesque in itself, and required no such artificial aids, which rather marred than improved its effect.

An active, strong young man, very well dressed, who appeared to be a tenant of this lodge, accompanied us with a gun in his hand. Descending to the river side, we walked on until we came to the natural arch which formed the entrance to the cavern. The river here spread out in the form of a small lake, and two boats were near the bank, in one of which our new companion embarked, attended by a peasant; we occupied the other boat, which was rowed by our guide. Marée had procured a large bundle of straw, with which he was to light us on our way.

Shortly after our entrance into the mouth of the cavern, our gunner, who advanced with us in his own boat, discharged his piece. The reverberation of the sound through the vaults of the cave resembled at first precisely a loud peal of thunder, prolonged by innumerable echoes for more than a minute, until they gradually became less and less audible, and then died away, apparently at a great distance. It was just like one of those crashes

which often occur towards the close of a storm ; seeming, when the sound first affrights us, to break immediately over our head, and then to go on rolling without interruption along the sky until it is heard no more. Numbers of swallows, who had their nests in the roof of the cave, alarmed by the uproar, flew around us in all directions ; nor were their terrors mitigated by the effects of a second discharge ; they seemed as if they would bring down about our ears the vaulted roof of the vestibule in which we then were.

Our gunner (having received his fee) then took his leave of us, and returned in his own boat. We were supplied with blue blouses, which we put on over our clothes, and advancing through the cloud of smoke which lingered over the lake, produced by the last discharge, we were borne into the dark womb of the mountain. Marée meanwhile separated a handful of straw from the bundle which he had brought, and having lighted it by a match, he placed himself at the head of the boat. One would have thought that a torch of pitch would have given a brighter and a more permanent light than the perishable material which he had brought for that

purpose ; but we afterwards found that the straw was better, as when it was nearly burnt out, he deposited it on the path we took, in order that its embers might assure us, upon our return, that we adhered to our right course in emerging from the labyrinth we were about to explore.

It demanded no great exertion of imagination, or rather of our recollection of the mythological fables familiar to us in our schoolboy days, to bring in lively colours before our eyes the picture of Charon, his bark, the Styx, and the shadows of the dead, with whose transmission to the regions beyond, the old navigator was charged. We were the shadows (happily, however, not of the dead) ; our guide in the dark behind us was Charon, and Marée, at the prow, might be supposed the “familiar” of the infernal ferryman, nothing loath to see his vessel supplied with new customers.

Marée waving his torch as high as he could around him, shewed us the roof of the cavern, which was highly polished ; but as we advanced, it became more porous, as we felt from the copious drops of water it permitted to fall upon our heads. The stalactites already began to shew themselves in

great abundance, some of them assuming the form of beaks of birds, some of large carrots. The arch above us now expanded nobly ; beneath it we could easily discern great varieties of formations, in which drapery, in many graceful arrangements, seemed to prevail. Some solid masses presented surfaces which seemed to have been carved by the chisel of a sculptor. Our atmosphere became so cold that we were chilled. The stillness of the scene was so complete, that even the crackling of the burning straw produced an echo. Marée having lighted a large handful, threw it on the water, which was now narrowed to the shape of a river. As we passed on, we looked back at the floating conflagration, which from a distance we might have imagined to have been the fragments of a boat consumed to the water's edge. It remained in sight for some time, until at length it diminished to the size of a star. Beyond it the light of the day was not yet wholly lost, so that we had here a good resemblance of the day star ushering in the pale grey of the morning.

Many of the stalactites which next presented themselves to view looked like dried fish hung up in stalls for sale. The forms were perfect, and we

might have easily thought ourselves in a fish-market, had not the amiable female venders been absent. We were now regularly benighted; not a ray visible in any quarter, save those which emanated from our straw torch. All was dark behind as the ages before the flood; and before us we had a strict image of the dimness of futurity. Having reached what Lefevre calls the hall of debarkation, we landed; he then carefully made the boat fast to the shore, and we proceeded beneath a regularly formed arch, hung with beautiful drapery, which was occasionally festooned with a degree of gracefulness well worthy of imitation.

The gem of the cavern is the “Boudoir of Proserpine,” for Lefevre has left no chamber without its designation. The apartment was by no means unworthy of the belle by whom it had been abandoned. The formations, many of which had the appearance of saplings cut off near the roots, were of pearly lustre, and at the top curled off most elegantly like the sprays and leaves of the young tree inclined by the breath of the zephyr, as if to give some idea of inverted Corinthian capitals, and served, I suppose, as candelabras for the fair owner

of the boudoir when she retired to array herself in all her charms. To confirm the supposition, hard by is the saloon, where all her dresses may yet be found ; her veils perfectly transparent ; her mantles, her scarfs, and shawls, all suspended with an eye to gracefulness of appearance. The roof of this depository is in many places fretted with enviable taste, and is said to be two hundred feet above the floor.

We visited several other chambers in the cavern, being obliged frequently to climb slippery heights, to creep through low passages, and to descend precipices, which cost us infinite toil. The number of inequalities and sinuosities of this kind in the cavern, several of which are of syphon shape, upright, or inverted, may be conjectured, when I state, according to calculations which have been made, that the current from the lake at one side of the hill to that on the other takes no less than fourteen hours to effect its passage, although the direct distance between one lake and the other, does not exceed a quarter of a league. The calculation has been verified in this way : When, after heavy rains, the river is rendered muddy on its ap-

proach to the cavern, no tinge appears in the waters of the lake on the opposite side until after the lapse of the time just stated.

Lefevre assured us that he had visited several corridors or galleries in this cavern, each of which was more than a mile in length, and led to numbers of apartments which he had not yet explored. He shewed us various specimens of the rocks, some of which were decomposed by the waters of the lakes, others vitrified. Here also he found pieces of black veined marble. We saw many stalactites in the shape of icicles; there was one mass, which has been called the club of Hercules, not undeservedly, so far as the resemblance to the general representations of that formidable weapon was concerned. The stalactites and stalagnites occasionally assume a columnar form, and adhere together, as if for mutual support.

In the grotto called that of the "Trophy" or "Mont Blane" there is a superb stalagmite, which rises in the middle, upon pieces of rock heaped up together by way of foundation. This pyramidal mass is as white as alabaster, and exhibits upon its surface a great variety of figures. Another group,

not less beautiful nor less resplendent than this, forms the principal ornament of another grotto, and seems to consist of bunches of large ostrich feathers ; the guide, however, has bestowed upon them the less poetical title of cauliflowers ! The most spacious of all the grottoes which we visited is that called the “grotto of the dome,” on account of the vast arch by which it is roofed. Few churches can boast of a dome so immense as this. Had this dome been formed outside the mountain, with proportional columns to sustain it, one might easily believe it to have been a work of the Titans when they were bent on scaling Olympus.

After exploring the principal chambers and examining the more prominent curiosities which the cavern contained, we were recommended by Lefevre to retrace our steps, as our course further on would be found very difficult and disagreeable, on account of the river being flooded. We found the burning embers deposited in various places by Marée extremely satisfactory in our way out of this dark and enormous labyrinth. In one spot, which presented many turns, the embers had altogether disappeared, having been blown away by a current of

air which passed through that part of the cavern. Even the familiarity of the old man with the windings of the place seemed baffled, nor could Lefevre give him any assistance. Marée proceeded alone in two or three trials as to the right course, keeping up communication with us by calling in a loud voice. Our situation at this moment was far from being enviable, more especially as our supply of straw was very nearly exhausted. Imagine us buried in the bosom of the earth, in the midst of a labyrinth out of which *we* at least could make not even an attempt at escape without adding, most probably, at every step, to the dangers of our position. Providentially, however, Marée at last lighted upon the path which he believed to be the right one, and we speedily found his conjecture to be correct, as we came again to some of our embers. Our gradual return to the day was in due time apparent by perceiving before us the first gleams of twilight, which becoming clearer and clearer as we advanced, we ceased to use our torch, and at length found ourselves once more in the presence of the glorious sun.

I was glad that we carried into execution our

intention to visit this truly wonderful display of the powers and, if I may presume to use the word, the caprices of nature. Undoubtedly the contemplation of such works teaches us that there are many things in this world which “we dream not of in our philosophy.” Innumerable, most probably, are the specimens of similar abysses formed in the interior of the earth and of the mountains raised upon it, of which we have as yet no conception. The volcano and the earthquake are still at their work, and although the geologists inform us that, as compared with the catastrophes of former days, all things now seem tending to repose, nevertheless it would appear that at no period of the world has the atmosphere exhibited more violent and more destructive agitations than within these last few years. But, leaving these topics to the meditations of scientific men, I shall only add, that I would not advise lady travellers to indulge their curiosity by going to see the Wardrobe of Proserpine, extraordinary though it be. The difficulties of the enterprise are much too severe for their ordinary strength, and should they venture upon it, they cannot escape without having their clothes pretty

well soiled. I was astonished to learn that Mrs. Tyrwhitt had accompanied her husband in his passage through this cavern from one lake to the other. She must indeed have had the courage of a heroine, though one would have never suspected its existence in the bosom of a lady who usually appears to be amongst the most timid of her sex.

CHAPTER XIX.

Departure for Luxemburg. Shakspeare's Forest. A dear Cup of Coffee. The Capuchin Church at Arlon. Festival Day. Luxemburg. Its renowned Fortifications. Road to Treves. Admirable Cultivation. First View of the Moselle. Village of Marter. Fine Fields of Corn. Vines. Village of Igel. Its celebrated Monument. Secundini Family. Description of the Monument. Subjects of the Sculptures.

FROM Dinant we directed our course towards Luxemburg, proceeding by voiture to the village of Emptinne, where we met the diligence from Brussels. The excellent road between that city and Luxemburg was completed only two years before the Belgian revolution. Passing through the pretty little town of La Marche, we again entered the forest of Ardennes—Shakspeare's forest; it fully realized all the ideas of sylvan mystery and beauty with which he has invested those charming shades. There being no regular hotel at Bastogne, we had refreshments in the house of the Demoiselles

Marguerites. In rousing up her kitchen fire, one of our hostesses finding her bellows somewhat asthmatic, immediately substituted for it an old gun-barrel, which, pointing to the fire, and blowing through the touchhole, she made to serve her purpose admirably. They charged us a franc per cup for their coffee, which in all conscience was quite enough. The road as far as Arlon was quite uninteresting.

The commentators upon ancient geography have set down Arlon as the Roman Orolanum. It was market-day ; the town was filled with all sorts of agricultural produce. It happened also to be the octave of the feast of St. Donatus, which was celebrated with much splendour by the order of the Capuchins, whose convent occupies a conspicuous position upon the summit of a hill that overlooks the town. I went up to their church, the winding pathway to which is ornamented at intervals by very old stone pillars, containing tablets, fixed in them, of the same material, which represent, in a rude style of carving, the passion and crucifixion of the Redeemer. The figures must have been cut in the very earliest stage of the art

as applied to ecclesiastical purposes : some of them retain traces of having been originally gilt and painted. The church was crowded with country people, the men in their monotonous blue blouses, and the women, for the most part, wearing cotton bonnets, being also in other respects very gaily dressed. I could not make out that the latter belonged to any style of beauty with which I am acquainted : I suppose they have one of their own. The German language begins to prevail here.

Arlon exhibits every symptom of being a stirring, thriving town ; several new houses were in progress of erection, and the people seemed all intent upon business ; it is the capital of that portion of the duchy of Luxemburg which has been added to Belgium under the late partition. A road has been constructed from this place to Metz, which very considerably shortens the way from London to Strasburg.

Shortly after leaving Arlon we arrived at the Dutch frontier, where our passports and luggage were examined. Within two hours afterwards we came suddenly upon Luxemburg, which seemed to us completely hemmed in between two ridges of

lofty rocks, narrow at the entrance, but growing wider as we advanced: it is seated on the river Alzette.

The utmost attention has been paid by the modern possessors of Luxemburg (Spanish, Austrian, French, and Dutch) to its fortifications, which are partly excavated in the solid rock, and have been pronounced by Carnot as the strongest combination of defences in Europe, after those of Gibraltar. I found them occupied by a garrison of four thousand men. While walking on the ramparts, I observed sentinels at intervals of almost every hundred yards. From the position in which the town is placed, chiefly on declivities of rocks, there is a good deal of singularity in the appearance of this place; several of the streets are accessible only by stairs or by zigzag carriage roads. It looks remarkably clean and healthy, and the presence of so large a military force imparts to it a peculiar degree of animation.

A diligence goes every day from Luxemburg to Treves. We were off at six o'clock in the morning (16th July); the sky was serene, the sun unclouded, and the atmosphere as genial as a traveller

could desire. Our course lay right through the principal part of the famed fortifications, beneath portcullises, long passages, with portholes on either side, and capable of being interrupted by huge iron gates ; and then over drawbridges and dikes filled with water, all strictly guarded by sentinels at every step, as if the town were beleaguered by an invading force. When we arrived within sight of terraces, upon which gardens shone out in all their summer opulence of vegetation and flowers, we supposed that we had quitted the precincts of the enormous bulwark. Nothing of the kind ; every eminence was turned into an outpost, and armed with cannon and watched by sentinels. We met a detachment of the garrison, who, even at that early hour, were returning from the exercise of sharp-shooting. They carried with them two targets, which, being perforated in all directions, spoke highly for their skill and discipline.

Our route led towards a lofty eminence, and the slow pace at which our vehicle moved enabled us to observe, as we wound our way upwards, the apparently impenetrable masses of rock within which Luxemburg was situated. The drawbridges,

which literally seemed suspended in the air, presented very remarkable objects in this magnificent picture of warlike preparation. But one is not surprised at the expense which has been bestowed upon these defences, and the vigilance with which they are guarded, even in a season of peace, when one learns that it is the only "*point d'appui*," according to Carnot, by which France can be most easily attacked from the side of the Moselle.

Having surmounted the eminence which rendered our course very slow for more than an hour, our horses trotted on at a pretty round pace, and we soon lost sight of Luxemburg. The road being constructed on the summit of a lofty ridge, enabled us to obtain views of the country all round us to an immense distance. The Belgian style of cultivation prevailed everywhere; the soil was absolutely teeming in every direction with wheat, rape, and clover; and wherever little spots of pasture presented themselves, they were well stocked with cattle, attended by boys and women.

Passing through the pleasant village of Salling, seated in a valley, we reached the large and very handsome town of Niederartwiler. Our road sub-

sequently passed through a series of corn-fields, bounded in the distance on each side by ancient and extensive forests. Rows of tall poplars lined our way, after the delightful fashion of France; tracts of rich pasturage were more frequently intermingled with the corn-fields than before; and were filled with oxen, cows, sheep, and goats, shepherds and shepherdesses, giving some idea of Arcadia. Over the distant forests summits of high mountains occasionally lifted their heads, arrayed as usual in their fascinating colours of azure.

The morning continued enchanting. Descending to Grevenmaucher, which, awfully German though it be in name, wears an appearance almost wholly Spanish, we soon again attained rising ground, and beheld on our right a fine sweep of hill, so beautifully planted that it seemed to be the park of a gentleman's villa: upon its more sunny declivities vines abounded. On the left another range of hills declined gradually to the margin of the way, occupied entirely by vineyards, arranged terrace over terrace, indicating our near approach to the Moselle, which we beheld in a few minutes after, flowing smoothly through an expanded

channel, its surface shining with something of a silvery lustre.

On the lower banks, near the current, long strips of linen were bleaching. Women, who stood in the river, were engaged in throwing water upon them from time to time, and in scolding scores of little daring half-naked urchins, who were paddling near them, flinging water at each other, shouting, squalling, fighting, laughing, and doing every thing—the roguish truants!—but attending to the admonitions of their mothers. There were several small, rather neatly-constructed boats near the farther bank, hard by the pleasant village of Marter, in which were a neat rustic church and a fine old chateau, to which was appended a large garden in the stiff pedantic style of former days. We observed, however, afterwards, near the river, several country seats in a more modern fashion. The meadows, just cut, yielded to the air their grateful perfume; the harvest of corn, which was remarkably fine and abundant, was everywhere falling rapidly beneath the sickle; the yellow fallow lands formed striking contrasts with the fields of clover and mangel-wurzel in their neighbourhood.

The Saar, in its progress towards the Moselle, with which it effects a junction, serves to mark the boundary between the Dutch possessions in the duchy of Luxemburg and the dominions of Prussia. We crossed it by a small bridge, and were immediately warned by a white pole standing erect, and painted in black diamond squares, that we were now in Prussian territory. Every thing in and on the diligence in the shape of luggage was taken down at the Custom-house for the purpose of being examined. The operation was very tedious, though conducted, I am bound to add, in the most civil manner.

We had full time, while detained here, to admire the beautiful scenery of the neighbourhood, which receives additional interest from the junction of the two rivers.

Resuming our seats in the diligence, we pursued our course close by the banks of the Moselle. Several boats, laden with stones, were drawn against the current by teams of horses: the animals were often obliged to wade through the river. The banks on our left were now all under vine cultivation, while, on the other side, a long range of hill, wild

and barren, rose above successive groups of various trees which grew near to the water's edge. Amongst these trees we perceived occasionally hamlets, whose white cottages a traveller in search of the picturesque can never pass by without interest. Quarries of red sandstone abound in all this part of the country.

We were now upon very ancient classic ground, the village of Igel being in sight, and this is only six miles distant from Treves, which some chroniclers assert to have been built even before Rome itself. We were travelling on the old Roman highway, and every step we advanced abounds in historical associations. Close to the road, as we passed through the village, is a monument or mausoleum, which seems to have puzzled antiquaries and travellers almost as much as the Pyramids of Egypt. Whence all their difficulties could have arisen it is impossible to conjecture, for the monument itself very clearly tells its own story. From an inscription upon it, perfectly legible, it appears to have been raised in memory of the Secundini, an ancient and distinguished family of Treves, such as the Balbi were in Spain, when that country was under

Roman jurisdiction, or as the Paulini were at Bordeaux, or the Saturnini, at Lyons,—that is to say, very wealthy merchants, and at the same time imperial commissioners for the management of the communications by post, intendants of the military forces, and contractors for the supply of the magazines.

The age of the erection of this monument has also been a matter of great controversy ; but the weight of opinion, and the architectural character of the edifice itself, appear to assign as its proper date the age immediately following that of the Antonines, when the arts, which had already attained so great a degree of perfection, were rather on the decline. It is altogether a highly interesting edifice ; it had been originally decorated with a profusion of sculptured ornaments in excellent style, but the greater part of these are now defaced. When it was first constructed, the stones (a brown stone), which were of a large size, were very neatly put together, but the external surface was left in its rude form ; they were then sculptured according to a series of designs, which were conceived and executed with great taste. The

monument, or obelisk, as it is sometimes called, is about seventy feet in height, by fifteen feet in width on one side, and twelve on the other.

The sculptures partly represent scenes of ordinary life, partly allegories having reference to the actions of the gods and of distinguished heroes. The southern façade exhibits in its principal compartment three figures, apparently male, supposed to be memorials of those friends who had been chiefly instrumental in promoting the prosperity of the Secundini family. These colossal figures, unfortunately much decomposed by the influence of the atmosphere, hold each other by the hand; the principal figure wears only the tunic; the two others are arrayed in the toga, the figure in the middle being much less than either of the two others: above their heads are medallions of three females.

The pilasters are ornamented by representations of infant genii, disposed one above another. Upon each of the capitals there is a head, beneath which is a bird, supposed to be the ibis, with its beak directed towards a ball. The principal figures on the two lateral façades are so much decayed that it is not possible to form any opinion as to their cha-

racter, except that it seems to be altogether mythological. Upon other parts of the monument may be seen Jason, clothed in his leopard skin, and armed with a sword; Theseus receiving from Ariadne the clew to the labyrinth; the head of the Minotaur; the Hesperides guarding, with the assistance of the serpent, the golden apples, and groups of dancing genii. The northern façade seems to be principally occupied with the labours of Hercules; a zodiac, supported by four colossal heads, which resemble those of the Tower of the Winds, at Athens; and groups of genii, some dancing, some armed with swords and shields, as if about to engage in combat.

CHAPTER XX.

Monument of Igel continued. Interior of a Chamber. A Warehouse. Country between Igel and Treves. Stone Crosses. Treves. Its great antiquity. Its former renown. Its decay. Ruined by the Goths and Vandals. Situation of Treves. The Black Gate. The Bishop's Bench. A Holy Anchorite. The Amphitheatre. Barbarous Exhibitions. Lancers exercising. Tunnels in the Rock. Public Baths. Cathedral of St. Helen. The Baptismal Font. The Archbishopric. The present King of Prussia. Electoral Tombs.

THE most interesting objects represented upon this very remarkable monument are those connected with the routine of the private life of the family to whose honour it has been dedicated. Amongst these sculptured pictures, if we may so style them, is the interior of a chamber, in which some business of importance is going on. The principal figure is seated at a table, surrounded by his agents, to whom he is reading one of several papers which he holds in his hand. Bales of me:-

chandize are disposed on the floor. In another quarter is seen a four-wheeled waggon, laden with goods, and drawn by four mules; it appears to have already just passed a town, and to have reached the open country, which is indicated by a tree. Elsewhere we behold vessels well filled with cargoes, sailing on the sea, and the family regaling themselves with a banquet. A number of travellers on horseback appear to be approaching the scene of festivity, by way of marking the hospitable dispositions of the Secundini. We have also here a sort of warehouse, in which several buyers are seen examining pieces of cloth and other goods, and making notes in their tablets; a light carriage (probably used for the post), drawn by two horses, and an infinite variety of other objects, in which the grave alternates with the gay. It is, upon the whole, one of the most curious monuments which have reached us from the Roman ages of decline; it was, to some extent, repaired in 1765 by order of the States-General of the duchy of Luxembourg, but only with a view to preserve it from the utter ruin with which it was then threatened; no attempt was made at restoration.

Between Igel and Treves the whole country was alive with industry—immense fields of corn either under the sickle or just cut down, and filled with peasants collecting the sheafs and heaping them together. Women were traversing the road with long baskets fastened to their backs, in which they carried sheafs of corn, and supplies of green food heaped above their heads, for their cattle. The road passed through an avenue of lofty poplars, through which we beheld numerous distant villages and hills, some shining in the rays of the noonday sun, some overshadowed by passing clouds. We scarcely moved a hundred yards without meeting old stone crosses, tokens of the Christian piety by which the whole of this district was distinguished in the primitive ages. The colour of the soil here is reddish; so also is that of the stones used in the construction of the roads and edifices of every kind; the first effect of which was to make us feel that we were in a country very peculiar in many respects, and if we might so say, more ancient, and even still more exuberant, than that which we had already traversed.

Treves offers to the traveller innumerable objects

of interest and a vast field for reflection. It is, undoubtedly, the most ancient city in Germany; the chroniclers, as I have already intimated, carry its pretensions to antiquity even much higher. We were scarcely set down by our diligence at the Poste aux Chevaux, near the Red House Hotel, when I perceived on the front of the latter an inscription in these terms:—

“Auxilium suis confidentibus,
Ante Romam Treviris stetit,
Annis mille trecentibus.
Perstet et æterna pace fruatur.
Amen.”

“The asylum of those who sought its protection, Treves existed one thousand three hundred years before Rome. May it be perpetual, and enjoy eternal peace. Amen.”

In point of rank and splendour, commerce, wealth, learning, and the arts, it was at one time considered to be the second capital of the Roman empire, and exercised jurisdiction over the whole of the first Belgic Gaul, which included Britain. It was in the time of Julius Cæsar a highly flourishing city; it has been the occasional residence of many Roman emperors—Constantius, Constantine

the Great, Julian, Valentinian, Valens, Gratian, and Theodosius.

One could hardly believe, looking only at its present extent and decayed condition, that it could ever have justly enjoyed the title of a second Rome; there is, however, no doubt upon the subject, for we can easily trace, in all directions, the remains of an ancient metropolis, abounding in opulence, replete with every resource of luxury, and marked by all the characters of imperial grandeur. Triumphal arches, palaces, and baths, upon a truly Roman scale of magnificence; amphitheatres, basilicas, aqueducts, and forums, all still may be discerned here in a state of ruin or comparative preservation. It was in its condition of greatest pride when first attacked by the Goths and Vandals, who demolished it to an extent from which it never afterwards wholly recovered. Partial revivals of its ancient power, and restorations of its most ornamental edifices, were effected under the government of the Archbishops of Treves, who were princes, arch-chancellors, and electors of the empire, and in their temporal characters possessed, in former ages, very great power and

authority. But with their government has expired every hope for Treves; it is now no more than the attenuated shadow of what it was, and looks the very picture of despair, weeping over days of prosperity and glory that are never more to return.

Treves stands in the valley of the Moselle, between two mountains, anciently called those of Mars and Apollo. Its most striking ancient monument is that called the Porta Martis, but more commonly the "Black Gate." Its original destination has never been satisfactorily ascertained; those, however, who are most familiar with the general character of the ancient triumphal arches are inclined to set it down in that order of architecture. Considering it as such, it is certainly the most extensive and curious structure of the kind in existence. With reference to style, it can bear no comparison with those of Rome; it was evidently raised at a period when simplicity and true taste ceased to preside over the arts; it abounds in halls and chambers, and galleries, for which no purpose can be assigned, except that of supplying to the citizens promenades where they might lounge in the heat of the day, or perhaps meet for

the transaction of mercantile affairs, and at the same time enjoy charming prospects of the surrounding country and of the town itself. The views from the summit of the eminence, especially, present a series of beautiful pictures, such as I have never seen assembled before within a circle so limited in its diameter.

One could easily fancy a prince bishop seated in an angle which contains a bench defended by a small parapet, on the highest part of the building, surveying beneath him a part of his ample possessions and their capital, rejoicing in the wonderful fertility of the hills and valleys around him, and the matchless beauties of the Moselle; and subsequently turning to his breviary to read his office, on a spot as complete in its silence and solitude as a hermitage could be. Indeed, it is recorded that a saintly anchorite, Simeon of Syracuse, who had previously been a monk in the convent of Mount Sinai, did take up his abode in one of the upper chambers of this structure, upon his return from the Holy Land. Several of the most extensive apartments in a lower story have been used as chapels, to which purpose they were converted by

Archbishop Poppe, in the eleventh century. In these chapels the divine service was celebrated even so late as the commencement of the present century.

The amphitheatre, which is at a short distance outside the town, remains in pretty good preservation. Like most of the Greek structures of the same kind, it was excavated out of the solid rock. It had been buried for ages beneath a mass of earth planted with vines, until it was cleared out by order of the late king of Prussia. The *panegyrists* of Constantine inform us, as if it were one of the most laudable transactions of his reign, that after his victory over the Franks, who in the year 306 had crossed the Rhine, and were in full march towards the Upper Moselle, with a view to make an attack upon Treves, he had a great number of his prisoners, amongst whom were two princes, collected in the arena of this amphitheatre, and exposed to the rage of wild beasts, which had been previously assembled for the purpose in the vaults of the building. It is recorded that, after the sanguinary animals had satiated their appetites, the unfortunate captives who still survived were com-

elled to fight as gladiators with each other, until they were all destroyed.

It happened that while I was seated on the top of a wall of this structure, for none of the benches now remain, and thinking of the wonderful changes for the better which the spirit of Christianity had produced, since those early days, in the minds of men upon subjects of this description, a company of lancers entered the arena on foot, in order to be taught the use of that weapon. Their evolutions, the sun occasionally glancing on their arms, and the animation which their presence and their exercises imparted for the moment, and so unexpectedly, to the scene, added not a little to the interest which I felt in contemplating it.

Only a part of the old amphitheatre now remains. In its perfect form it is said to have been capable of affording accommodation to six thousand spectators; nevertheless it bears no comparison in point of size with those of Verona or Nismes, not to speak of the Coliseum. Two passages to the arena were bored through the interior of the rock, on the side of Treves, one of which is now used as a cellar for the produce of the

grapes with which the summit and sides of the hill were covered. During the labours of the workmen engaged in clearing the theatre, numberless bones and tusks of wild beasts were discovered. The public road passes now through the arena, and not far from it is a well of excellent water. In the neighbourhood of the amphitheatre are remains of the public baths and other ancient buildings, to which various names have been assigned by divers travellers and chroniclers.

I visited the cathedral of St. Peter, also called of St. Helen, in consequence of its being part of the palace which was occupied by that empress. The east and west ends of this structure are semicircular, and are constructed of bricks, which bear every appearance of a Roman character. Within the church are four immense granite pillars; three are said still to occupy the places in which they were arranged when the basilica was originally constructed; the fourth pillar has been walled up, in consequence of its having declined from the perpendicular and threatened to give way. The whole of the four Corinthian capitals, however, with which the columns were surmounted, may

still be seen in the church: some of the arches are round, some sharply pointed. The organ is magnificent; it was made at Munster in the year 1837: the ceiling over it is beautifully carved. The baptismal font is of pure white marble, and executed in the most exquisite style: it is said that an Englishman offered five thousand pounds for it. The tomb of Baldwin, formerly prince and elector of Treves, is a remarkably handsome structure, and may be considered one of the principal ornaments of this singular church, which reminded me in some points of view of the mosque at Cordova.

When we were at Treves the see was vacant, and had been so for some years. The chapter had elected for archbishop a clergyman whom they believed to be in every way worthy of that arduous office, but the late king of Prussia, in the prosecution of that feeling of hostility towards the Catholic Church by which he was unhappily actuated, refused to confirm the nomination of the chapter. His successor has wisely adopted a different system; since his accession to the throne, he has, I am informed, in no instance attempted to

interfere with the just demands of his Catholic subjects, with whom he is as popular as his father was the reverse. By this prudent policy he has avoided the consequences of a revolution, which was notoriously in preparation throughout the whole of the Rhenish provinces, the fairest portion of his dominions.

Besides the monument already noticed, there are several other electoral tombs in this church, which, though very unequal in their fashion of style and execution, still cannot be contemplated without feelings of profound interest, when one recollects that the prince bishops of Treves formerly held sway over the whole country extending from Treves to Coblenz, and that within their jurisdiction were the four electorates of Mayence, Treves, Cologne, and the palatinate of the Rhine. These monuments, the vast height of the building, the ancient massive columns, the associations connected with the name and character of the Empress Helena, all combine to impart an air of primitive Christianity, and at the same time of an imperial majesty, to this cathedral, which are not to be found in any other sacred edifice that I have ever seen.

CHAPTER XXI.

Gradual of the Choir. The Crypts. Church of Our Lady. Former Churches of Treves. Palace of the Electors. Appearance of a Cross in the Sky. Optical Illusions. Atmospheric Influences. Poem of Conrad Celles. Ausonius. His Poem on the Charms of the Moselle. Former Navigation of the River.

WITHIN the choir there is a lamp, of modern date, admirable for the antique simplicity of its form. The panels of the stalls are beautifully inlaid with ivory. Upon a book-stand we found a gradual, that is, a large thick volume, containing the anthems sung at high mass and vespers, which has the reputation of being thirteen hundred years old. It is richly illuminated, though not always in the best style. One of the most curious of these diminutive paintings represents the manna falling from heaven. There are four othergraduals in the choir, but they are less ancient than the one I have mentioned. Behind the high altar is a remarkably

handsome repository for the holy sacrament. I think that it was here also I observed a picture by Rubens, of the "Garment without a seam," worn by the Redeemer, the original of which is stated to have been obtained at Jerusalem by the Empress Helena, and to have been by her placed in a cabinet now walled up in this church. Here also we were shewn a manuscript of the Epistles and Gospels, alleged to have been executed by St. Simeon. The pulpit is very elaborately carved. There are two crypts beneath the church, which add not a little to those primitive Christian associations so peculiarly belonging to this holy pile.

Near the cathedral is the less ancient, but remarkably graceful church of Our Lady, erected in the pointed style, and finished about the middle of the thirteenth century. The portal, which is of a semicircular form, is ornamented with a great profusion of sculpture, but all in admirable taste. The interior is in the form of the Greek cross, and the roof is sustained by twelve pillars, upon each of which is suspended a picture of an apostle. The picture of St. Sebastian, which the visitor can hardly fail to notice, was painted by Guido Neri,

and was purchased for this church at an expense of twenty thousand francs. Three magnificent glass lustres, in modern style, depend from the roof. The peculiar character of this church is gracefulness, which pervades all its features. There is near the principal entrance a small black stone inserted in the floor, from which the whole interior may be viewed with the greatest advantage. There is a very beautiful series of cloisters attached to this edifice, which are kept, at the expense of the canons, in the best order.

The ecclesiastical buildings in Treves were, before the French revolution, much more numerous than they are at present; but the armies of the republic, with their usual ardour for destruction, demolished the greater number, and converted most of the remainder into barracks and stables. The cathedral and the church of Our Lady alone escaped their vandal hostility to every thing that was magnificent or beautiful. The palace of the electors and bishops, also a most extensive and sumptuous pile, has experienced a similar degradation. It was erected on the site of an immense Roman edifice, the original appropriation of which

has never been satisfactorily explained. It was upon a colossal plan. Open windows of a vast height may be traced in those parts of the building which still remain, and serve to give an extraordinary idea of the plan upon which it was constructed, whatever its purpose may have been. The greater part of it was demolished, in order to afford a space for the erection of the palace of the electors.

The only other objects worth noticing in Treves, are a pillar of granite raised in the market-place, surmounted by a cross, said to have been raised in commemoration of one that appeared in the sky ; and the fragment of a bridge over the Moselle, mentioned by Tacitus, and believed to have been originally constructed twenty-eight years B.C. It was blown up during the wars of Louis XIV. Anciently it stood in the middle of the town, though now at the end of it, thus marking the almost general ruin in which this once imperial capital has been involved. The piers, still remaining, are composed of wonderfully large stones, which are supposed to have been supplied by the lava quarries of Mendig.

The pictures of crosses in the sky are mentioned by many old chroniclers, who also relate frequently the phenomena of double suns and moons. These statements are most generally put down to the account of superstition, although the improved knowledge of atmospheric influences which we have lately attained serves to teach us that such phenomena are within the legitimate circle of natural occurrences. The apparition of a cross in the heavens, in, I think, one of the southern departments of France, about the commencement of the summer of the year 1842, has been attested by so many witnesses, who had no opportunity of communicating with each other, that no doubt can be entertained of the fact.

These double suns and moons and aërial crosses are all resolvable into causes, which arise in some cases from the refractive, in others from the reflective, powers of the atmosphere. The appearance of whole villages inverted in the sky is a fact of no rare occurrence in the Highlands of Scotland: in such instances, the misty air acts as a mirror. I have frequently seen my own face so strongly reflected in the dense elements of a London fog out-

side my window, that, for the novelty of the thing I have shaved in it without the aid of my looking-glass. Here is an occurrence well authenticated : A farmer residing at the foot of the Felds, in Lancashire, happening to stand outside his door of a summer evening while a heavy dew was falling, looked towards the ridge of the heights above him, and distinctly saw what he believed to be a great number of horsemen galloping along the ridge as fast as their steeds could go. Knowing that those heights were, from their rocky and precipitous character, absolutely inaccessible to equestrians who did not choose to risk their lives in the experiment, he called his neighbours to witness the extraordinary spectacle, for which they could in no manner account. Their united testimony upon this matter leaves the naturalist no room to doubt the correctness of their statement. Upon inquiry, it was found that a single horseman rode at a rapid pace along a lower, and not dangerous, declivity of the Felds on the evening in question, and the legitimate conclusion is, that his figure was not only thrown up to the ridge, but multiplied there by the action of the atmosphere. Many occurrences of this kind

might be added, if I were disposed to shew that we really live in a world of "magic." Several friends of mine and I, while sailing up the Adriatic, beheld, one fine afternoon, an Italian forest completely projected on the sea, with its yellow autumnal foliage, its waving branches, and its occasional breaks, through which deep vistas were opened. The tradition about the cross alleged to have been seen in the heavens above the city of Treves, is by no means so improbable as some sages would have us to believe.

I could have wished that time had allowed us to prolong our sojourn in that venerable ruin of an ancient capital. In Rome one hesitates to decide between its Christian and its Pagan claims to renown ; but in Treves all is old, quaint, and peculiar, supplying the spectator with the shadowy spectacles of emperors, electors, devastating armies, sanguinary wars, moving in the procession of ages, and leaving behind them solitude, decay, sepulchral monuments, and the records of a vainglory which has wholly passed away. A poet of the fifteenth century (Conrad Celles) thus describes his feelings while contemplating this most interesting city :—

“ O quanta vestris mœnibus inclytis,
 Obliterata est gloria principum,
 Viri Trevirenses, Mosellæ
 Qui gelidum bibitis liquorem.

“ Romam videbar cernere corrutam
 Prorsus ruina ; dum feror impiger
 Per porticus, portas, et aulas,
 Perque palatia prisca regum.

“ Passim per agros, quæ modo concidunt,
 Feruntque celsis culminibus suis,
 Thalisque summis atriorum,
 Arboreos frutices et herbas.

“ Idola Divūm vidimus inclyta
 Inscripta sacris sub titulis suis,
 In plateis, heu ! nullo honore,
 Marmoreis recubare saxis.

“ Sepulchra Græcis vidi epitaphiis
 Inscripta, busta, et stare sub hortulis ;
 Et manibus sacrata functis,
 Urna suprema reperta in agro est.

“ Avara quid non tempora devorant ?
 Tulere metas Herculis æneas :
 Nos nostraque involvunt ruinis,
 Perpetuo rapiente cœlo.”

These stanzas form a striking contrast with the glowing picture given of Treves and the Moselle by Ausonius, in his well-known poem upon the beauties of that river.

“ Armipotens dudum celebrari Gallia gestit ;
 Trevericæque urbis solium, quæ proxima Rheno
 Pacis ut in mediæ gremio secura quiescit ;
 Imperii vires quod alit, quod vestit, et armat.
 Lata per extentum procurrunt mœnia collem :
 Largus tranquillo prælabitur amne Mosella,
 Longinqua omniginæ vectans commercia terræ.”

Man and his empires, his marts of commerce and luxury, his palaces, and towers, and towns, pass away ; but the works of nature ever remain, as young, as vigorous, as grand, as beautiful, and as imperishable as when they first left her plastic hand. The line

“ Longinqua omniginæ vectans commercia terræ”
 no longer applies to the Moselle ; but Ausonius has celebrated no charm in the river itself which does not still exist, and which is not quite as fresh and captivating as it was when first he saluted that ever-flowing river.

“ Salve amnis, laudate agris, laudate colonis ;
 Dignata imperio debent cui mœnia Belgæ,
 Amnis odorifero juga vitea consite Baccho,
 Consite gramineas amnis viridissime ripas !

* * * *

Illa frueoda palam species, quum glaucus opaco,
 Respondet colli fluvius, frondere videntur
 Fluminei latices et palmite consitus amnis—
 Quis color ille vadis, seras quum protulit umbras
 Hesperus et viridi perfundit monte Mosellam !”

Some time previous to the period of our visit to Treves, the Moselle was regularly navigated from Metz to Coblenz only by public barges, pretty well fitted out, which plied up and down the river twice a week, or by private boats specially engaged for the purpose—a mode of conveyance subject to uncertainty and delay, for the river winds so much in its course, that it makes the distance twice as great between Metz and Cologne as it would be by a direct road. The winds therefore that in one part of the river would be favourable, in another would be just the reverse. Besides, these boats, whether public or private, always stopped at night, and landed their passengers at inns generally of an inferior character, although the charges were exorbitant enough, especially to English travellers. These circumstances, added to the fact that the Moselle lies out of the great thoroughfare from England to Germany by the Rhine, have conspired to render the former river almost as little known to my countrymen in general as the Danube was before I steamed down that magnificent river. Stanfield and Harding had indeed already illustrated some of the most striking views on the banks

of the Moselle, by their incomparable drawings, but no English tourist, that I know of, except the editor of Murray's admirable "Hand-Book," whose index to its attractions is necessarily very compendious, had attempted to describe the beautiful scenery with which that river abounds, at every point of its course between Coblenz and Treves. Higher up the stream, as far as Metz, the Moselle wears rather a tame character; it is only below Treves that we behold it decked out in all its ornaments.

CHAPTER XXII.

Steam Navigation of the Moselle. Our Embarkation. The Country Village of Pfalzel. Forges of Quint. Curves in the River. Village of Riol. Saloon of the Vessel. A Farmer. Village of Trittenheim. The Friar Trithemius. Accusation of Sorcery. The Friar's Celebrity. Calumnies against him. Invocations of the Dead. Mary of Burgundy. An Incantation. The Friar's Doctrine.

SOME experiments, with a view to the steam navigation of the river, had been made in the summer of 1840, by a spirited company formed at Coblenz; but I believe they were rather irregular, and received at first no great encouragement. The bed of the river offered many impediments, which the Prussian government has spared no expense in endeavouring to remove; and it was only in the summer of 1841 that steam-boats were fully established on the river. We embarked in one of these at five o'clock on the morning of the 18th of July (1841). For the last day or two the weather had

been by no means agreeable ; there was a great deal of rain, and on the morning we set out, rather a high wind. A small steamer started for Metz shortly before we left our moorings. There were very few passengers on board of either vessel. Some difficulty at first occurred in getting one of our paddle-wheels into motion, but the matter being soon set right by the engineer, we proceeded on our course.

The country presented at some distance on our right an agreeable range of hill, and on the left hamlets in the midst of corn-fields, which had just yielded their treasures to the sickle. The cathedral and towers of "Our Lady's Church," in Treves, were still in view. As we advanced, the hills on our right assumed a bolder character ; they were all cultivated to the top. Within the bosom of a semicircular series of eminences on our left, a pretty village, with its picturesque church, shone out in a partial gleam of the sun. Close to the bank on our right is the village of Pfalzel, beautifully, but most dangerously situated, for whenever the river rises considerably above its banks, Pfalzel is almost certain to be swept away by the

inundation. Frequent instances of this calamity have occurred, but still the village is speedily restored after the flood has subsided. It is surrounded by a number of fruit-trees. The chief occupation of its inhabitants appears to be the culture of vegetables for supplying the market of Treves. A little lower down the small stream of the Ruwer falls into the Moselle. Here commenced the aqueduct which, in former ages, supplied the amphitheatre of Treves with water.

Making a sudden bend to the left, a bold promontory seems almost to forbid further progress. Opposite to it is Quint, whose lofty chimneys indicate its extensive forges and works for the smelting of the iron ore which abounds in the neighbouring mountains. The iron of Quint enjoys a high reputation, and is much sought after. Had not our helmsman been stationed on an elevated platform, after the excellent plan of the American steam-boats, it would have been often difficult for him to have directed the course of the vessel, so sharp are the turns of the river. Running round the point of the promontory just mentioned, the river, pressed within a narrow channel, wheeled

around with so much more rapidity on the left than on the right bank, that the waters near the former were actually higher than they were near the latter, where the current was more sluggish. The point of the promontory is, in fact, the apex of a triangle, along whose second side we then ran in a comparatively smooth stream, which widened considerably as we approached Riol, the Rigidulum of the Romans. Tacitus mentions a conflict of some importance which took place here between the men of Treves and the Roman legions.

The wind had been by this time somewhat abated, and the day clearing up, the sun shone out with so much force that we were obliged to seek shade in the cabin. It was indeed a transition, realizing the old adage, "from the frying-pan into the fire." The principal saloon was constructed close by the boilers, so that the heat of the chamber was utterly intolerable. The smell of the coals used in the furnace was moreover so sulphurous and overpowering, that we were glad to make our escape again to the deck, and drink in the fresh breeze wherever we could find it.

Most of the village churches which presented themselves to the eye in various directions wear a remarkably gay appearance. The walls and a portion of the slated steeples are usually whitened, and on the top of the graceful spire is usually a gilded vane, glittering in the light.

We took in from a little hamlet which we passed two passengers, one a clergyman from Luxemburg, who was on his way to Bertrick, celebrated for its mineral springs, which he intended to drink. He represented the waters, from his own experience, as eminently beneficial to those invalids who stood in need of tonics. The other accession to our list of voyagers was a very fine specimen of a farmer of these countries. He wore a straw hat, a blue blouse, brown cloth trousers, encased from the knee to the ankle in leather, and strong boots beneath. He had a short stick, with a knot at the end of it, and fastened to his hand by a stout leather string. On one of his fingers appeared a massive gold ring, and in his ears rings of the same material. He wore a free and fearless air, of the old Teutonic style.

The reader may imagine the extent to which the

Moselle winds here, when he learns that after sweeping round by the small hamlet, we proceeded for some miles in a due eastern course, and then as rapidly receding to the west, arrived at Neumagen, precisely opposite to the hamlet just mentioned.

Before reaching Neumagen, we passed by Trittenheim, which, though a large village, containing upwards of 800 inhabitants, is scarcely visible from the river, on account of the number of fruit-trees within which it is embosomed down to this point; the vines on either side of the Moselle are said to produce a very inferior sort of wine: here they begin rapidly to improve in quality. Trittenheim is remarkable as being the birthplace of an abbé, named Trithemius, who was greatly advanced beyond his age in genius and learning of various kinds. He was born in the year 1462, and from his earliest boyhood evinced a strong desire to pursue the cultivation of his mind, rather than that of the vineyards, to which his father wished to confine him. With a view to accomplish his purpose he escaped to Treves, and upon representing his wishes to a holy friar, belonging to one of the many convents then flourishing in that city, he was admitted

within the monastery, and applied himself to his studies with so much assiduity, that he was eventually ordained priest, and took up his abode in a convent near Mayence.

The discipline of this establishment had fallen into a lamentable condition, but, by his energies, it was speedily reformed. His own example, as well as his earnest exhortations, inspired his brethren with a love of learning, and in due season he enjoyed the happiness of seeing those who had previously loitered away their time in idleness, attentively employed ; some in preparing pens, ink, and parchment ; some in transcribing the Scriptures, some in copying other useful works, some in binding the books when finished, and others in illuminating such manuscripts as he thought worthy of that distinction.

When he first entered the convent, the library did not contain more than fifty volumes at the utmost ; when he finally quitted it, the library shewed an accumulation of nearly two thousand volumes, all written under his inspection. Meantime he had composed several original works, and made a conspicuous figure in some public controversies ; which had

obtained for him so much celebrity, and at the same time, as its natural accompaniment, so much envy, that he was accused of sorcery—the fate of many of the learned men of those times.

There is no doubt that the abbé had given no small ground for these accusations. Borne away by the enthusiasm of the age for learning the great secrets of nature, he wrote a work containing some very extraordinary doctrines concerning the powers of the intellect ; portions of which he communicated to a learned Carmelite friar, whom he supposed to be one of his most sincere friends. The Carmelite, however, freely spoke of the work in public ; but instead of drawing down censures upon the author, it excited such general wonder and admiration, that the learned men of France and Germany, the Margravine of Baden, the electors of the Palatinate and of Brandenburg, and great numbers of other princes, curious savants, and persons of every degree, crowded to the convent of Sponheim, where the abbé then was, in order to get a sight of the wonderful book itself. Presents of gold and precious stones showered in upon him from all quarters. The convent was daily be-

sieged by visitors from the most remote parts of Europe.

These unlooked-for results tended to inflame the hatred of his enemies to such an extent, that they propagated the most absurd falsehoods against him; accused him of being in communication with the infernal spirits, and of being enabled to summon before him any person with whom he thought fit to hold a conversation. Amongst other things it was said, that, touched by the profound grief by which the emperor Maximilian was afflicted, upon the death of his beloved spouse, Mary of Burgundy, the abbé proposed to produce her shade before him. The emperor accepted the offer with unbounded delight. Attended only by a chamberlain, he proceeded to an apartment fixed upon for the incantation, where he found the abbé already waiting, with the various instruments of his black art around him. The doors and windows of the chamber being made perfectly secure, the magician proceeded in his operations, and in a few minutes Mary appeared before him, arrayed in all the charms of her youth, and in the magnificent attire of an empress.

But the emperor was incredulous; he said he

never could be persuaded that it was the shade of his lost wife, unless he could find upon the nape of her neck a wart which was there in her lifetime. He accordingly examined her neck, and when he found there the veritable token of which he was in search, he believed, and was forthwith, by way of punishment for his momentary distrust in the power of the magician, transported himself into the lower world, with all its horrors. Not much relishing this part of the incantation, he cried out to the abbé to put an end to it, sharply reproved him for carrying it on so far, and forbade him ever again to be guilty of so great an act of temerity.

This, and a thousand other similar stories, having been circulated against the abbé, he was of course reputed as one of the great magicians of the age.

He had the courage to affirm in one of his works, that when he was in a fit of inspiration, he could communicate to any person, no matter how distant from him at the moment, all his thoughts, without those thoughts being embodied in words, or in signs of any description. He taught also, that at the commencement of the world, seven angels were

set over the seven planets ; and yet that he held no doctrine inconsistent with the faith of the Catholic church, to which he deferred in all things. His works, most of which are still extant, are distinguished by great learning, intermixed with mystical ideas, which afforded to his enemies but too many materials for their calumnies. He suffered much in health from their incessant persecutions, and at length died, literally broken-hearted, in 1516. The little cabin in which he was born is still shewn at Trittenheim.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Camp of Constantine. Neumagen. Aerial Cross. Seen by the Emperor and his Troops. Constantine's Vision. He adopts the Cross for his Standard. Gibbon. Beauties of the Moselle. Village of Piesport. Best Wines. Charming Landscapes. Vineyards. Gardens. The delicious Braunerberger. Hill upon which it is grown. Cold Winds. Cardinal de Cusa. His Hospital. Letter to its riotous Inmates. Berncastle. Exquisite Scenery. Ancient Manners. Character of the Moselle.

ALONG the bank on our right, a range of high and barren mountains covered the country to a great extent, and seemed to allow but little space for the “*inlyta castra Constantini*,” which Ausonius represents as having existed at Neumagen, or Noviomagus. The emperor had an extensive palace here, the materials of which are said to have been employed in the erection of one or more of the numerous monasteries that formerly abounded in all parts of this country. The river, the peculiar aptitude of the soil for the growth of vines of the

best description, and the eminently beautiful scenery presented to the eye at every bend of the Moselle, no doubt had their weight with the good monks in inducing them to fix their abode in these quarters.

It was somewhere near Neumagen, if the local traditions are to be believed, that Constantine beheld the cross in the sky, on which appeared the words “*In hoc signo vinces.*” Eusebius, following the narrative of the emperor, mentions the phenomenon in these terms:—“When now the sun had ascended the middle heavens, and was rather inclining towards the time of afternoon, he (the emperor) declared that he beheld in the heavens, with his open eyes, the form of a cross glittering with effulgent light, and upon it the inscription of the words—‘*In hoc vince.*’”

Constantine was marching in the afternoon at the head of his legions, when this phenomenon is said to have occurred. It was seen by the whole army, to whom, of course, it was an object of inexplicable wonder. He could not find amongst his courtiers, nor amongst the (Pagan) priests who were with the army, any person to give him an explanation of the

aerial cross. He continued his march until evening, when he retired to repose. During the night he is said to have had a vision, in which he saw the Redeemer holding in his hand a cross, exactly resembling that which he had observed in the heavens; it is added that the Saviour directed him to make one of the same form, and to attach to it the standard which was carried before him in battle; and that he assured the emperor, that by virtue of the cross he would conquer all his enemies.

The moment Constantine awoke, he communicated his vision to his confidential friends; he sent for some jewellers (a circumstance which is supposed to indicate his arrival at Treves), to whom he gave orders for the fabrication of a cross of gold, according to a model with which he himself supplied them. Eusebius describes it as a lance ornamented with gold, and traversed by a piece of wood, which gave it the form of a cross. At the bottom there was a crown of gold ornamented with diamonds, beneath which was the monogram of Jesus Christ. Upon the arms of the cross was suspended the imperial standard in purple, skilfully embroidered with gold, and enriched with precious

stones. Upon the lance itself, and beneath the cross, were incrusted the portraits of the emperor and his sons. The promise which had been given to him was realized; "he did," says an old chronicle, "conquer his enemies by the power of the Labarum (the mysterious banner was so called), and his victory was, at the same time, the symbol of the triumph of Christianity over Paganism.

No ancient historian has mentioned the place where Constantine is said to have beheld this heavenly sign. Gibbon finds in the silence of Eusebius upon this point grounds for withholding his belief altogether from this miraculous event. Other authors suppose it to have occurred at Besançon, Lyons, and Sinzig.

So far we have been navigating the upper Moselle, where the vines have been nearly all of a very inferior quality, the hills barren, and the scenery by no means comparable with that of the lower parts of the river. The richness and the full beauties of the Moselle may be said to begin at Emmel, a village placed beneath a bold and lofty promontory, to which we made nearly a direct course from Neumagen. At a short distance from

Emmel, and on the opposite bank, is Piesport, where the best of the most celebrated wines of the Moselle are produced. One perceives immediately in the more imposing size of several houses, and in the appearance of the people of the village, who crowded the bank as we approached it, all the indications of a country teeming with the choicest gifts of nature. They were all neatly dressed, healthy, and joyous: the women were comely and gay. They had only to look at the fine hills above their village, which seemed all one vineyard, and in the most promising condition, to assure themselves of the abundant wealth which the approaching vintage had in store for them. There is a handsome old church in the village, with three towers, one of which is crowned by a dome, and in the early Gothic style. The cottages near the margin of the stream are remarkably neat, and every one had in its windows bouquets of flowers.

Reluctantly quitting this charming village, we almost instantly lost sight of it, as we wheeled about abruptly to the right, and steamed away in a south-eastern direction, as if we had no sort of intention of going on to Coblenz, like a lover running away

from his mistress in a momentary despair. But we had no feeling of that description, for the prospects that opened upon us every moment seemed the work of magic, varying in outline, feature, and colour, but all contending with each other in beauty : rich successions of hills planted with vines to the summit, but affording space below for numberless villages and churches, whose spires peep up over groups of trees, which afforded a welcome shade from the now brilliant sun to the comfortable cottages embosomed amongst them. Gardens well stocked with vegetables, and all the flowers of the season, were near enough to the smooth mirror of the Moselle to behold themselves reflected there in all their charms.

After taking a peep at the interior of the country in a southern direction, we resumed our course northward, and curving westward slightly, reached Dusemont, whence the amateur of Moselle wines derives that exquisite kind denominated Braunerberger. The picturesque hills upon which the wine is grown are separated from Dusemont by the Moselle ; so that the inhabitants of the village have in view before them not only the sources of

their wealth, but also ranges of the most delicious scenery which can be found in any part of the world. The Braunerberg, the hill upon which the wine grows, is of a peculiarly graceful form, rising from an ample base below, and gradually tapering upwards, but not to a point, gently rounded in every direction, until it terminates in a convex. It is often remarkable that where nature bestows her most valuable gifts, she signalizes them also with some marks of her own beauty.

At a short distance from Dusemont is Mulheim, where two small brooks, coming from the south, fall into the Moselle. One of these is said to contain particles of gold. We proceeded between banks increasing, as we advanced, in attractions, well peopled by smiling villagers, and presenting tokens of general content and happiness such as one rarely meets with elsewhere. We had occasional drawbacks upon the sensations with which these scenes inspired us, in gusts of wind so cold, that it seemed as if they came from the pole itself. To guard against them we were obliged instantly to snatch up our cloaks and wrap them closely around us.

Just before arriving at the rather important town of Berncastle, we passed Cues, famous for its hospital, which was founded in the year 1438 by the celebrated Cardinal de Cusa, a native of the village, and said, but incorrectly, to have been the son of a poor fisherman. It was intended for the reception of thirty-three invalids, in honour of the number of years during which our Saviour lived upon earth. Six of these were to be priests, six gentlemen, and twenty-one of the class of bourgeoisie. Although the revenues of the establishment increased considerably in the course of time, the number of invalids always continued the same. Upon entering the hospital they made a vow of obedience and fidelity to the rector, and assumed a grey habit. They had cells assigned to them, but they lived in common, and had all the external appearance of being members of a religious order.

A curious letter is extant, written by an archbishop who was one of the appointed visitors of the hospital, which pretty well shews that this asylum for old age and infirmity was not always the abode of perfect sobriety and peace. It is dated in December in 1673, and is addressed to the lay-

brothers of the hospital. The letter runs thus:—

“ We have learned from unquestionable sources, that some amongst you frequent the cabarets, and drink to excess; that you withhold the obedience which is due to the rector, and that you even strike with your naked fists, knock down, and violently beat the peaceful and orderly brethren of the house, whom you keep constantly in fear of their lives. All this displeases me exceedingly. You are therefore hereby required, each and every one of you, to abstain, henceforth, from making a racket or noise of any kind or degree whatsoever; carefully to avoid tippling and drunkenness; to pay to the rector all due obedience; not to oppose his orders by word or deed; to be very careful not to lay your hands upon him; not to offend him in any way, nor to attack him by force of arms. In fine, I hereby require of you to observe each and every of the statutes and rules of the hospital, such as they are read to you every quarter. This is our inflexible will.”

Berncastle, which is a little below Cues, is a

town of at least 2,000 inhabitants. We stopped here for nearly an hour, as our captain had some merchandize to deliver. It is situated in a very narrow valley, beneath a lofty precipitous pile of the Hunstruck mountains, which press boldly here upon the Moselle. Indeed, below the town, so closely do the mountains approach the shore, that the road is scarcely wide enough to allow of two carriages passing one another. Upon the highest point of the mountain are seen the ruins of an ancient castle, of which two towers, one called the Mandatthürm^e, the other the Castle, remained in good preservation until they were destroyed by the French in the early part of the revolutionary wars. From these ruins, one of the most magnificent views of the Moselle, and of the country on each side, to a vast distance, may be obtained. The situation of the town itself is peculiarly beautiful, seated beneath savage rocks, from which a fine cascade tumbles, until it reaches the river, having nearly opposite to it the noble hospital of Cuss, and possessing within its own precincts an extremely handsome parish church, dedicated to St.

Michael, and an ancient convent of the Capuchins. The steeple of the church is tall and graceful, rising to an almost imperceptible point. Eight small towers, besides, decorate the edifice, which is erected in the pointed style. The view on the opposite side of the Moselle, upon which no mountain appears, but an undulating plain, richly cultivated, contrasts in a most striking manner with the precipitous heights of the Hunstruck, and charms the mind with its smiling, animated, varied, expanded fields of beauty, perfect in all its attributes.

It does not injure this picture to add, that the inhabitants of Berneastle are said still to retain much of their ancient customs, and that they present in their conduct towards each other, and also to strangers, the most amiable dispositions. Frank in their manners, cordial in their friendships, deeply attached to the religion of their fathers, which they practise with a most becoming piety, they uniformly wear an air of cheerfulness and even of gaiety, which speaks the innocence of the heart within. This character belonged formerly

to most of the population, who, to borrow a classic phrase, “drank of the waters” of the Moselle. Churches, monasteries, and religious houses appear to have been in no part of Christendom so numerous as they were in the middle ages, and down even to a later period, upon the banks, or at least not remote from the confines of this enchanting river.

Nor is this surprising. The pervading character of the Moselle is beauty; not beauty of a kind that may be passed by and easily forgotten, but strongly defined; never aspiring to the sublime, but next to it in the diapason of that heavenly harmony which breathes throughout the creation. I have seen those parts of the Rhine which are admitted, universally, to comprehend its principal attractions, but they are, according to my taste, inferior to those of the Moselle. They want the inspiration of design, the completeness of outline, the true grace of form, the disposition of principal and accessory objects, the exquisite sunshine and ethereal shade, which the Moselle and its banks exhibit. Those who admire Dante would prefer

the Rhine; those who worship Milton ought to seek the grandeur of the Danube; but they who love Tasso and his gardens of the Hesperides would find on the Moselle much to remind them of the genius of that immortal poet.

END OF VOLUME I.

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